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The STORY OF THE GREAT WAR

CHAMPAGNE · ARTOIS
GRODNO · FALL OF NISH

VOLUME VII

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CONTENTS

PART I.—THE WESTERN FRONT

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Summary of First Year's Operations	1919
II.	Fighting in Artois and the Vosges	1926
III.	Political Crisis in France—Aeroplane Warfare—Fierce Combats in the Vosges—Preparations for Allied Offense	1932
IV.	The Great Champagne Offensive	1941
V.	The British Front in Artois	1961
VI.	The Battle of Loos	1970
VII.	The Cavell Case—Accident to King George	1978
VIII.	Operations in Champagne and Artois—Preparations for Winter Campaign	1984
IX.	Events in the Winter Campaign	1997
X.	The Struggle for Verdun	2011

PART II.—THE WAR AT SEA

XI.	Naval Situation at the Beginning of the Second Year—Submarine Exploits	2023
XII.	The Sinking of the Arabic—British Submarine Successes	2030
XIII.	Cruise of the Moewe—Loss of British Battleships	2039
XIV.	Continuation of War on Merchant Shipping—Italian and Russian Naval Movements—Sinking of La Provence	2045

PART III.—THE WAR ON THE EASTERN FRONT

XV.	Summary of First Year's Operations	2054
XVI.	The Fall of the Niemen and Nareff Fortresses	2058
XVII.	The Conquest of Grodno and Vilna	2065
XVIII.	The Capture of Brest-Litovsk	2073
XIX.	The Struggle in East Galicia and Volhynia and the Capture of Pinsk	2080

PART III.—THE WAR ON THE EASTERN FRONT—*Continued*

CHAPTER		PAGE
XX.	In the Pripet Marshes	2089
XXI.	Fighting on the Dvina and in the Dvina-Vilia Sector	2092
XXII.	Winter Battles on the Styr and Strypa Rivers	2103
XXIII.	On the Tracks of the Russian Retreat	2109
XXIV.	Sidelights on the Russian Retreat and German Advance	2120
XXV.	Winter on the Eastern Front	2130

PART IV.—THE BALKANS

XXVI.	Battle Clouds Gather Again	2135
XXVII.	The Invasion Begins	2143
XXVIII.	Bulgaria Enters the War	2149
XXIX.	The Teutonic Invasion Rolls on	2153
XXX.	The Fall of Nish—Defense of Babuna Pass	2162
XXXI.	Bulgarian Advance—Serbian Resistance	2170
XXXII.	End of German Operations—Flight of Serb People—Greece	2180
XXXIII.	Allies Withdraw into Greece—Attitude of Greek Government	2188
XXXIV.	Bulgarian Attacks—Allies Concentrate at Saloniki	2196
XXXV.	Italian Movements in Albania—Conquest of Montenegro	2207
XXXVI.	Conditions in Serbia, Greece, and Rumania	2219

PART V.—THE DARDANELLES AND RUSSO-TURKISH CAMPAIGNS

XXXVII.	Conditions in Gallipoli—Attack at Suvla Bay	2224

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Aeroplane Brought Down by Anti-Aircraft Guns *Colored Frontispiece*

Opposite page 1976

Little French Orphans with a Soldier
Zigzag Trenches in Champagne
French Artillery in the Champagne Drive
British Wire Tappers Concealed by Haystacks
French Bands in the Argonne Wearing Gas Masks
Ruins of Ypres, the City of the Dead
Abandoned German Trenches in Champagne
French Officer in a Shattered House in the Vosges

Opposite page 2040

Recoil of French Gun L'Heroique
Arrival of the German Field Post
German Horseman Emerging from the Cover of a Forest
Transporting Artillery by Ox Teams in the Carpathians
Ruined Cottage in Lemberg near Galicia
Constructing a Pontoon Bridge over the Weichsel
Dead Left in a Quarry near Verdun
General Joffre and General Petain at Verdun

Opposite page 2104

Unveiling the Statue of Von Hindenburg
Austrian Infantry Who Took Part in the Drive into Russia
Prince Leopold and his Staff in Warsaw
Austrian Convoy Passing Through Dubno, Volhynia
Transporting Russian Prisoners Across a Gorge in Galicia
Peasant Woman of Galicia Tilling the Fields
Russian Refugees Returning to their Village
Preparing Dinner in the Ruins of a Home

Opposite page 2168

Serbian Soldiers Crossing a Wrecked Bridge
Archduke Friedrich and Baron Conrad von Hoetzendorf
Serbian Soldiers Intrenched on a Hill near the Danube
Constructing a Bridge over the Danube
Austrian Motor Car in the Black Mountains of Montenegro
Bosnian Troops Marching into Albania
Bulgarian Artillery in a Protected Position
Firing a Skoda Mortar in the Mountain Country near Belgrade

LIST OF MAPS

	PAGE
VERDUN (*Colored Map*) . . . . . *Opposite*	2022
CHAMPAGNE DISTRICT, THE	1943
BATTLE IN CHAMPAGNE, SEPTEMBER, 1915, DETAIL MAP OF . . .	1949
ARTOIS REGION, SEPTEMBER, 1915, THE FRENCH GAINS IN	1966
BATTLE AT LOOS, THE	1975
VERDUN, THE FORTS AT	2014
VERDUN, FIGHTING AT, UP TO MARCH 1, 1916	2021
KIEL CANAL	2047
RUSSIA, THE BATTLE FRONT IN, JANUARY 1, 1916	2108
BALKAN (SERBIAN) OPERATIONS, GENERAL MAP OF	2142
GERMAN-AUSTRO-BULGAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST SERBIA, THE BEGINNING OF THE	2148
RETREAT OF SERBIANS	2184
SALONIKI, THE ALLIES AT	2204
MONTENEGRO, THE AUSTRIAN CAMPAIGN IN	2215

PART I—THE WESTERN FRONT

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY OF FIRST YEAR'S OPERATIONS

THE first anniversary of the war on the western front fell on August 2, 1915. It was on Tuesday, July 28, of the previous year that Count Berchtold, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, had pressed the button in "the powder magazine of Europe"—the Balkans—by declaring war on Serbia.

For two days the world looked on in breathless, wondering suspense. Then, like a series of titanic thunderbolts hurled in quick succession, mighty events shaped themselves with a violence and a rapidity that staggered the imagination.

On July 31, 1914, "a state of war" was proclaimed in Germany; the next day (August 1) that country declared war on Russia; on August 2, 1914, Germany delivered her ultimatum to Belgium and invaded both France and Luxemburg, following up these acts with a declaration of war against France on the 3d of the same month.

Before the sun had risen and set again there came the climax to that most sensational week: Great Britain had thrown her weight into the scales against the Teutonic Powers. This occurred on August 4, 1914, the same day that the German frontier force under General von Emmich came into contact with the Belgian pickets before Liege.

After thirty-six hours of fighting the southern forts were captured and the city fell into German hands on August 7, 1914. It was not until the 15th, however, that General Leman, the Belgian commander, was conquered in his last stronghold, the northern fort of Loncin. When that fell, the railway system of the

Belgian plains lay open to the invaders. Leman's determined stand had delayed the German advance for at least a week, and afforded an extremely valuable respite for the unprepared French and British armies.

The first drafts of the British Expeditionary Force landed in France on August 16, 1914. On August 7, 1914, a French brigade from Belfort had crossed the frontier into Alsace and taken the towns of Altkirch and Mülhausen, which, however, they were unable to hold for more than three days. Between August 7 and August 15, 1914, large bodies of German cavalry with infantry supports crossed the Meuse between Liege and the Dutch frontier, acting as a screen for the main advance. The Belgian army, concentrated on the Dyle, scored some successes against the Germans at Haelen, Tirlemont, and Engherzee on the 12th and 13th, but after the fall of Fort Loncin the German advance guards fell back and the main German right under Von Kluck advanced toward Brussels. On the 19th the Belgians began to withdraw to the fortress of Antwerp. Brussels fell to the Germans on the 20th. Von Kluck turned toward the Sambre and Von Bülow advanced along the Meuse to Namur. On the opposite bank (the right) of the Meuse the Saxon army of Von Hausen moved against Namur and Dinant, while farther south the German Crown Prince and the Duke of Württemberg pushed their forces toward the French frontier. Meanwhile, General de Castelnau, commanding the French right, had seized most of the passes of the Vosges, overrun upper Alsace almost to the Rhine, and had reached Saarburg on the Metz-Strassburg railway. On August 20, 1914, the Germans attacked Namur, captured it on the 23d, and demolished the last forts on the 24th. This unexpected event placed the Allies in an extremely critical situation, which led to serious reverses. The British force on the left was in danger of being enveloped in Von Kluck's wheeling movement; the fall of Namur had turned the flank of the Fourth and Fifth French armies; the latter was defeated by Von Bülow at Charleroi on the 22d; the pressure exerted by the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and the crown prince also contributed to render inevitable an immediate

retirement of the allied right and center. The French army that had invaded Lorraine—a grave strategical blunder—had also come to grief. The Bavarians from Metz had broken its left wing on the 20th and driven it back over the frontier. De Castelnau was fighting desperately for Nancy on a long front from Pont-à-Mousson down to St. Dié. On the 24th the British line fell back to the vicinity of Maubeuge, where Von Kluck attempted to close it in. Sir John French frustrated the plan by further retiring to a line running through Le Cateau and Landrecies, August 25, 1914. After a violent holding battle during two days the whole British front had fallen back to St. Quentin and the upper valley of the Oise.

It was General Joffre's plan to retreat to a position south of the Marne, where his reserves would be available, a movement which was successfully carried out by all parts of the allied line during the following week. By September 5, 1914, this line extended from the southeast of Paris, along the southern tributaries of the Marne, across the Champagne to a point south of Verdun. Beyond that, De Castelnau was still holding the heights in front of Nancy. The powerful German advance had forced the Allies back some hundred and thirty miles, almost to the shelter of the Paris fortifications. It seemed only a matter of hours to the fall of Paris when General Joffre began his counteroffensive on September 6, 1914. Attempting to pierce and envelop the allied left center, Von Kluck marched across the front of the British to strike at the Fifth French Army commanded by General d'Espérey, who had replaced Lanrezac after the Charleroi defeat. But the turn of the tide was at hand. The Sixth French Army from Paris, under General Manoury, fiercely attacked Von Kluck's rear guards on the Ourcq; Sir John French drove against the right of the main German advance; the Fifth and Ninth French armies held the front of Von Kluck and Von Bülow; the Fourth French Army south of Vitry resisted the piercing movement of the Duke of Württemberg, and the Third French Army (General Sarrail) checked the crown prince at Verdun, while De Castelnau at Nancy entered upon the final stage of the battle of Lorraine. The

first great German offensive had failed in its purpose. By September 12, 1914, the whole German front was retreating northward. The Aisne plateau, where the Germans came to a halt, is considered one of the strongest defensive positions in Europe, and General Joffre soon realized that it could not be taken by direct assault. He therefore attempted to envelop the German right and extended his left wing—with a new army—up the valley of the Oise. Some desperate German counterattacks were met at Rheims and south of Verdun, but they achieved small success beyond creating a sharp salient in their line at St. Mihiél, where the invaders managed to cross the Meuse. General Sarrail defended Verdun with a field army in a wide circle of intrenchments, with the result that the crown prince was unable to bring the great howitzers within range of the fortress, and his army suffered a severe defeat in the Argonne.

The allied stand on the Marne and the resultant battle not only checked the German avalanche and saved Paris, but dislocated the fundamental principle of the whole German plan of campaign—to crush France speedily with one mighty blow and then deal with Russia.

On September 3, 1914, the Russians had already captured Lemberg—two days before the allied retreat from Mons came to a sudden halt on the Marne. On that same day, too, the French Government had been removed from Paris to Bordeaux in anticipation of the worst. Having secured the capital against immediate danger, General Joffre now began to extend his line for a great enveloping movement against the German right. He placed the new Tenth Army under Maud'huy north of De Castelnau's force, reaching almost to the Belgian frontier. The small British army under Sir John French moved north of that, and the new Eighth French Army, under General d'Urbal, was intended to fill the gap to the Channel. With remarkable flexibility the Germans initiated the movement with their right as fast as the French extended their left, and the whole strategy of both sides developed into a feverish race for the northern shore. Before General d'Urbal could reach his appointed sector, however, that "gap" had been filled by the remnants of the Bel-

gian army, liberated after the fall of Antwerp on October 9, 1914. By a narrow margin the Allies had won the race, but were unable to carry out the intended offensive. Desperate conflicts raged for a month, but they succeeded in holding the gate to the Channel ports. The first battle of Ypres-Armentières opened on October 11, 1914, when the Germans attacked simultaneously at Ypres, Armentières, Arras, and La Bassée. As a victory at either of the two last-named places would have amply sufficed for the German purpose, this fourfold attack appears to be a rather curious division of energy. The passages at Arras and La Bassée were held by General Maud'huy and General Smith-Dorrien respectively. The former defended his position for the first three weeks in October when the German attacks weakened; the latter, with the British Second Corps, had reached the farthest point in the La Bassée position by October 19, 1914. Violent fighting occurred round this sector during the latter part of October, and, though compelled to yield ground occasionally, the British force prevented any serious German advance. In the early stage of the struggle the Belgian army and a brigade of French marines held the Yser line. A British squadron, operating from the Channel, broke the attack of the German right, and during the last week of October the Belgians held the middle crossings, with the assistance of part of the French Eighth Army. All immediate danger was removed from this section by October 31, 1914, after the Belgians had flooded the country and driven the Württembergers back at Ramscapelle.

Returning to Ypres, we have stated that the Germans attacked four different points in this region, on October 11, 1914. By the 20th, however, it became apparent that their main objective was the Ypres salient—neither the best nor the easiest route to the sea. What, then, was the motive underlying this particular phase of the German strategic plan? It would be pure presumption—taking that word at its worst meaning—to criticize the deep, long-headed calculations of the German war staff. A reason—and a good reason—there must have been. What the historian cannot explain he may, perhaps, be permitted to speculate upon in order to arrive at some working hypothesis. Hence, would it

be considered an extravagant flight of fancy to assume that the German decision was influenced by the very simple fact that the British Expeditionary Force was concentrated in and around Ypres? Skillful stage management is useful even in the grim drama of war, and the defeat or elimination of the British forces in the first great battle of the war would indeed have produced a most sensational effect with almost incalculable results. Be that as it may, the first battle of Ypres has already been accorded its position in the British calendar as "the greatest fight in the history of our army." There is yet another distinction that battle can claim: it was the first mighty collision between Anglo-Saxon and Teuton in the history of mankind. They had fought shoulder to shoulder in the past—never face to face. French troops also took part in the battle; they consisted of territorials, some cavalry, and Dubois's Ninth Corps; but the heaviest blows were delivered with whole-hearted force and energy upon the British line. This remarkable fight lasted nearly a month. During its progress the Allies withstood some half a million German troops with a force that never exceeded 150,000 in number.

Before the last thunderous echoes of Ypres had melted away in space, dreary winter spread its mantle over the combatants with impartial severity. During the next three months the opposing forces settled down and heavily intrenched themselves and then began that warfare at present familiar to the world, resembling huge siege operations. The Allies were fighting for time—the Germans against it. The allied commanders aimed at wearing down the man-power of the enemy by a series of indecisive actions in which his losses should be disproportionally greater than their own.

The most important events of the winter campaign were the fight near La Bassée in December, 1914, where the British Indian Corps distinguished itself; the fighting at Givenchy in January and February, 1915; the battle at Soissons in January, 1915, where the French lost some ground; the long struggle in northern Champagne during February and March, 1915, where the French first made use of artillery on a grand scale; and some considerable actions in the neighborhood of Pont-à-Mousson and the southeast valleys of the Vosges.

In March, 1915, the Allies began what has been described as a tentative offensive. Between March 10 and March 12, 1915, the British advanced about a mile on a front of three miles at Neuve Chapelle, but the aim of the operations, which were directed against Lille, could not be achieved. Early in April the French carried the heights of Les Eparges, which commanded the main communications of the Woevre, an action that led to a general belief that the Allies' summer offensive would be aimed at Metz. But the plan—if it ever was entertained—was abandoned toward the end of April, 1915, when the critical situation of the Russians in Galicia made it imperative to create a diversion in another area, where the effects would be more quickly felt. Before the French attack could mature, however, the second battle of Ypres was developing.

The Germans began shelling Ypres on April 20, 1915, to prevent reenforcements from entering the salient, and in the evening of April 22, 1915, they made their first attack with poisonous gas. A French division lying between the canal and the Pilken road had the first experience of this new horror added to the methods of warfare. Much has been written in condemnation of employing poisonous gas, and the practice has been widely discussed from the "moral" and "humane" point of view. The Germans claim that the French used it first—a contention not supported by evidence. "On the general moral question," says Mr. John Buchan, the well-known English writer on military subjects, "it is foolish to dogmatize." He points out that all war is barbarous in essence, and that a man who died in torture from the effects of poison gas might have suffered equal agony from a shrapnel wound. Hence he draws the conclusion that the German innovation, if not particularly more barbarous than other weapons, was at least impolitic, since its employment raised a storm of indignation and exasperated the feelings of Germany's enemies. Be that as it may, the poison clouds proved very effective at Ypres during April and May, 1915. The French line was driven in and the left brigade of the Canadians on their right was forced back in a sharp angle. For the first five days the northern side of the salient was steadily pressed in by gas and artillery

attacks. This, the second battle of Ypres, ended about May 24, 1915; it had lasted practically as long as the first battle, though the fighting had been less continuous. The Germans were meanwhile striving desperately to force a decision in Galicia and Poland, simultaneously fighting a long-range holding battle in the west with fewer men and more guns.

On May 10, 1915, began the great attack by the French in the Artois, aimed at securing Lens and the communications of the Scheldt valley. After violent artillery-fire preparations, the French center south of Carency was pushed forward a distance of three miles. In a few days they took the towns of Albain, Carency, Neuville St. Vaast, and most of Souchez, besides the whole plateau of Lorette. But the Germans had prepared a number of fortins, which had to be captured before any general advance could be made. This mode of warfare enables a numerically inferior force well supplied with ammunition to resist for a considerable time the most resolute attacks. The French army was still engaged in this operation when the first anniversary of the war dawned. The situation at the moment is summarized in a French official communiqué as follows: "There has been no great change on the western front for many months. Great battles have been fought, the casualties have been heavy on both sides, but territorial gains have been insignificant."

CHAPTER II

FIGHTING IN ARTOIS AND THE VOSGES

ON the first of August, 1915, the situation on the western front was as follows: The position of the Belgian troops has been described; the British held the line from the north of Ypres to the south of La Bassée. The Germans had closed in to some extent round Ypres during the two big battles, and the trenches now ran in a semicircle about the city at a distance of from

two and one-half to three miles. The line turned south at St. Eloi, skirted the west of the Messines ridge, turned east again at Ploegstreet Wood, and south to the east of Armentières. Hence the trenches extended southwestward to Neuve Chapelle and Festhubert to La Bassée. The remainder of the front—down to the Swiss frontier—was defended by the French, along by Lille, Rheims, and the fortresses of Verdun, Toul, Epinal, and Belfort.

After the battles of May and June, 1915, in Artois, activity on the western front became concentrated in the Vosges, where the French by a series of comparatively successful engagements had managed to secure possession of more favorable positions and to retain them in spite of incessant and violent counter-attacks. The supreme object of the allied commanders at this stage was to wear down their opponents through vain and costly counteroffensives, and to absorb the German local resources in that sector. It had been decided by the Allies to begin a fresh offensive on the western front in August, 1915, but owing to incomplete preparations, the attempt was of necessity postponed till the third week in September. It was extremely urgent that some determined move should be made as speedily as possible; the Russians were suffering defeat and disaster in the east, and were already retreating from Warsaw in the first days of August, 1915. The British and the French meanwhile could do little more than engage in local actions until their arrangements for offensive operations on a vast scale should be completed. On the other side, the Germans were also busily making preparations to provide against every possibility in case of retreat. New lines of defenses were constructed across Belgium; formidable complex trenches guarded by barbed-wire entanglements; concrete bases for heavy guns connected by railways; and a large fortified station was erected. These preparations rendered possible a very rapid transportation of troops and munitions to Brabant and Antwerp.

The fighting on the western front during August, 1915, may be described as a fierce, continuous battle, a lively seesaw of capturing and recapturing positions, followed at regular intervals

by the publication of the most contradictory "official" reports from the German, French, and British headquarters. Many of them gave diametrically opposite accounts of the same events. In the first week of the month the Germans made furious attacks against the French positions at Lingekopf and Barrenkopf. All through the Argonne forest the combatants pelted each other with bombs, hand grenades, and other newly invented missiles. Several determined attempts were made by the Germans to recapture the positions lost at Schratzmannele and Reichsackerkopf, but the French artillery fire proved too strong. Soissons was again bombarded; desperate night attacks were delivered around Souchez, on the plateau of Quennevières, and in the valley of the Aisne; local engagements were fought in Belgium and along parts of the British front; trenches were mined and shattered, while aeroplanes scattered bombs and fought thrilling duels in the air. The Belgians were forced partly to evacuate their advanced positions over the river Yser, near Hernisse, south of Dixmude. In the Argonne the Germans, by a strong infantry charge, penetrated the first line of the French trenches, but were unable to hold their ground.

On August 9, 1915, a squadron of thirty-two large French aeroplanes carrying explosives, and accompanied by a number of lighter machines to act as scouts, set out to bombard the important mining and manufacturing town of Saarbrücken, on the river Saar, in Rhenish Prussia. This was where the first engagement in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 was fought. Owing to mist and heavy clouds, only twenty-eight of the aeroplanes succeeded in locating the town, where they dropped one hundred and sixty bombs of large caliber. A number of German aviators ascended as soon as the flotilla's arrival had been signaled, and a lively skirmish ensued between them and the French scouts. The results and casualties of the raid have not leaked out.

The German General Staff was evidently not unacquainted with the fact that the Allies had a big "drive" in contemplation. Most of the fighting had been forced by the Germans with ever-

increasing violence and energy. Toward the middle of August, 1915, their attacks became fiercer still. After a deadly bombardment that literally flattened the countryside, and in which shells of all calibers as well as asphyxiating gas bombs were hurled against the French positions between the Binarville-Vienne-le-Chateau road and the Houyette ravine in the Argonne, the German infantry dashed from their trenches in great numbers and close formation and charged across the intervening ground. So furious was the onslaught that the French were driven well back out of their shattered defenses. Within a few hours strong reenforcements hurried to the spot enabled the French to deliver a counterattack and recover some of the lost ground. Simultaneously, the Germans attempted to storm the French position in the neighborhood of La Fontaine-aux-Charmes, but with less success. During the last week of July and the first half of August, 1915, large bodies of German troops were detached from the armies operating on the eastern front and poured into France and Flanders. Different estimates fix the numbers at from 140,000 to 200,000.

On August 18, 1915, violent fighting broke out in the region north of Arras, in the course of which the French took an important field position. In a desperate bayonet charge the following night the Germans vainly endeavored to recover the ground. The French also captured a trench in a long battle spread over a wide section of the Alsatian front. In the Artois they seized the junction of the highroads between Bethune and Arras and between Ablain and Angres. North of Carleul they held the Germans in check against a heavy artillery, infantry, and bomb attack, but were driven out of some trenches they had previously won on Lingekopf. By the 20th the Germans had regained some of the trenches on the Ablain-Angres road, but lost them again in a French bayonet charge two days later. French aviators bombarded the railway stations at Lens, Hénin-Liétard and Loos, in the Department of Pas de Calais. Arras, the scene of some of the severest conflicts in the war, was subjected to another prolonged bombardment by the heavy German artillery. Thus the pendulum swung to and fro; the main

strength of Germany and Austria-Hungary was strenuously being exerted in the Polish salient, while on the western front the Germans also conducted a harassing and exhausting defensive. Meanwhile the Allies were gradually completing their preparations for the great coup from which so much was expected.

On August 31, 1915, the science of aviation lost one of its most daring and brilliant exponents by the death of Alphonse Pégoud. No man before him ever took such liberties with the law of gravitation or performed such dare-devil pranks at dizzy altitudes up in the sky. He was the first to demonstrate the possibility of "looping the loop" thousands of feet from the earth; many have done the trick since, but for the pioneer it was a pure gamble with almost certain death. Even into the serious business of war Pégoud carried his freak aeronautics, though it must be added that his remarkable skill in that direction had enabled him to escape from many a perilous situation. A few days before he fell Pégoud carried out a flight of 186 miles over German territory. He returned unscathed, while the planes of his machine were riddled with bullet holes. On the occasion of decorating Pégoud with the Military Medal in March, 1915, the French Minister for War said: "Time and again he has pursued the enemy's aeroplanes successfully. On one day he brought down a monoplane and a biplane and compelled another biplane to land while he was all the time within range of fire." The following two of his innumerable thrilling exploits deserve to be recorded: "At one time Pégoud caught sight of a German ammunition depot and dropped nine bombs on it. The air concussion was so great from the explosion of the ammunition that his machine was all but wrecked, and he regained his equilibrium only after performing more than exhibition acrobatics. On another occasion, having located a captive German balloon, he ascended to a great height behind the clouds and then literally fell out of the sky toward his target. At a distance of only fifty yards he dropped a bomb which struck the balloon squarely. The vibration waves caused his aeroplane to bounce about like a toy boat on a rough pond. But Pégoud still carried his good

luck and, managing to steady the craft, sailed away amid a hail of German bullets."*

Of all the fighting on the western front during the month of August, 1915, the main interest attaches to that carried on in the struggle for the important mountain peaks in the Vosges which dominated German positions in the Alsatian valleys and plain. According to the French official reports, these operations resulted in the capture of the peaks named Lingekopf, Schratzmannele and Barrenkopf. The German official statement of September 2, 1915, however, claimed that the first and last of these had been recaptured. The French preparations for the attack on Lingekopf included the building of a mountain road eight miles long with communication trenches extending even farther, and also the construction of innumerable camps, sheds, ammunition and repair depots, as well as ambulance stations. The mountain road proved to be a triumph of engineering, as more than a hundred tons of war material passed over it daily without a single breakdown. The slopes which had to be stormed were thickly wooded, which greatly facilitated their defense, while the main French approach trenches were exposed to a double enfilade fire, rendering their use impossible in daytime. Between Schratzmannele and Barrenkopf there was a German blockhouse with cement walls ten feet thick. This was surrounded with barbed-wire entanglements and chevaux-de-frise. The French delivered their first attack on July 20, 1915. After a violent bombardment of ten hours, chasseur battalions stormed the German positions, capturing the Linge summit to the left and the Barren to the right. The Germans, however, firmly retained their hold on Schratzmannele. They caught the exposed French flanks with a stream of machine-gun fire and forced the chasseurs to retire to sheltered positions lower down the slopes. Two days later the French made another attack, and for quite a month, judging from the contradictory "official" reports, these peaks changed hands about twice a week. The French claim that they obtained "complete possession" on August 22, 1915, and that "the enemy, who had employed seven brigades against

* New York "Sun."

us, had to accept defeat." The German version, on the other hand, ran: "The battle line of Lingekopf-Barrenkopf thus passed again into our possession. All counterattacks have been repulsed."

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL CRISIS IN FRANCE—AEROPLANE WARFARE—FIERCE COMBATS IN THE VOSGES—PREPARATIONS FOR ALLIED OFFENSE

IT was also during the month of August, 1915, that the political horizon in France was temporarily overcast by one of those peculiar "crises" which seem to happen chiefly in countries enjoying the most liberal institutions and the greatest freedom of speech and press. On the 6th it was announced from Paris that the Government had decided to replace General H. J. E. Gouraud, Commander of the French Expeditionary Force at the Dardanelles, by General Sarrail, who had been designated Commander in Chief of the Army in the Orient. That Gouraud would have to be relieved of his command was painfully obvious, for that gallant officer had been struck by a shell while visiting a base hospital on July 8, hopelessly shattering his right arm, which had to be amputated. As, however, the French military contingent in the ill-starred Gallipoli adventure was but a small affair, the appointment of General Sarrail to the command thereof could only be regarded as the reverse of a promotion. In the first great German offensive toward Paris it was General Sarrail who had successfully defended the fortress of Verdun against the attacks of the German Crown Prince. Gradually the story came out that the general was the victim of a political intrigue—a plot to displace him as well as M. Millerand, the Minister for War. An acrimonious discussion developed in the French Chamber on August 14, 1915, in which some of the members nearly came to blows. The political truce, arranged between the

conflicting parties at the beginning of the war, hung in the balance. Faithful to the old tradition that the duty of the Opposition is to oppose anything and everything, the Radical-Socialists and the Socialist party were loud in their denunciation of the conduct of the war, and desired to allocate responsibility for the military failures of the previous year. A number of high officers had already been "retired" in connection with those failures, which were serious enough. But the charge alleged against Sarrail was that he had omitted to supply his men adequately with antipoison gas masks. In one of the German attacks in which gas was used, Sarrail's front was pierced and a thousand men were forced to surrender. Some accounts gave the number as 5,000. For this the general was at first suspended, and then offered the other command, which he refused on the ground that if he was guilty he deserved punishment; if not, he was entitled to reinstatement. The real motive underlying the prosecution, however, was generally believed to have been one of a purely political nature. Sarrail, a "Republican," as opposed to a "Reactionary," which latter signifies a conservative in politics and, frequently also, a professed churchman—in short, General Sarrail had attracted the animosity of both the clerical and radical parties. When, finally, the Government promised to increase the Dardanelles force to 80,000 men, he accepted the appointment.

The first week in September, 1915, saw considerable artillery activity along the whole front. Except in the Vosges, where French and German bayonets clashed on mountain peaks and in underground tunnels, infantry action had been suspended for nearly two weeks. Heavy bombardments had been maintained by both sides—those of the Allies being especially deliberate and persistent. As a fireman would sway the nozzle of his streaming hose from side to side, so the Allies poured a continuous, sweeping torrent of shot and shell over the German positions in certain well-defined zones along the line. It began from the extreme left on the Belgian front, thence swung into the region of Souchez, then around Arras, farther on along the Aisne, particularly at the two extremities of the Aisne plateau, turned to

the right in Champagne, spread to the Argonne, next in the Woevre and finally in Lorraine. Beneath the cyclone and out of sight trench mortar actions were fought, mining operations carried on, bombs and hand grenades thrown.

On September 1, 1915, four German aeroplanes had dropped bombs on the open town of Lunéville, killing many civilians. As a measure of reprisal forty French aeroplanes returned the compliment by making another air raid on Saarbrücken, where they bombarded the station, factories, and military establishments. A squadron of thirty or forty vessels of the British Fleet bombarded the whole of the Belgian coast in German possession as far as Ostend. French artillery stationed in the vicinity of Nieuport cooperated to shell the German coast batteries at Westende. In retaliation for the bombardment of the open towns of St. Dié and Gérardmer by German aeroplanes, a French aeroplane squadron assailed the railroad and military establishments of Freiburg in Breisgau. Aerial operations had by this time become a powerful auxiliary to the combatants on each side. The aeroplane attained a definite position as a weapon even in trench and field warfare. Machines hovered over the lines every day, reconnoitering and dropping bombs on positions, stores, transports, moving troops, trenches, and munition depots. Bombardment by aeroplane was, in fact, quite as serious and formidable a business as any artillery attack. The bombs carried by these machines were exactly of the same caliber as those used by heavy guns. Constant practice afforded by daily opportunities had enormously increased the skill of the aviators, many of whom could hit a small house from high altitudes without much trouble. Duels and pitched battles in the air were of daily occurrence on the western front. As soon as an "enemy flyer" hove in sight on either side of the lines, locally attached aviators rose and attacked the intruder. This, the most "modern" method of fighting, has produced a crop of thrilling incidents and stirring examples of bravery exhibited by the German, French, and British flying men. A code of what might be called "aerial chivalry" has spontaneously grown up among the flying fraternity. Two pretty incidents will suffice to demonstrate: A

German aviator had been attacked and brought to earth by a French airman. The German was killed in the contest. In the dead man's pocket was found a diary of his adventures in the war, and other happenings, from day to day. It was written in conversational style addressed throughout to his wife, together with a letter to her of the same day's date. The next morning a French aeroplane flew over the German line. Descending to within a few hundred yards of the ground, despite the hail of bullets that whistled around him, the aviator dropped a neatly wrapped parcel, rose suddenly to a great height and was gone. That parcel contained all the dead German aviator's private property, his papers, medals, etc., with a note of sympathy from the victor. A few days after the death of Pégoud, who was killed in mid-air before he fell, a German aviator flew at great height over an Alsatian commune on the old frontier and dropped a wreath bearing the inscription: "In memory of Pégoud, who died a hero's death, from his adversary."

The French method of aerial maneuvering is interesting as well as effective. Their air squadrons operate in the following manner: ten machines rise 6,000 feet along the enemy's line; ten others rise 9,000 feet. If an enemy machine attempts to pass the Frenchmen attack simultaneously from above and below, while, if necessary, two other machines come to their aid. Thus the intruder is always at a disadvantage. On several occasions the Germans attempted to fly across the French lines in force, but always with disastrous consequences. When the French set out in squadrons to make a raid or bombard a position they pursue the same tactics and achieve very important results.

Early in September, 1915, General Joffre paid a visit to Rome, was received in audience by King Victor Emmanuel, and decorated with the highest Italian military distinction—the Grand Cross of the Military Order of Savoy—as proof of his majesty's esteem for the French army. General Joffre afterward made a tour of the Italian battle front and conferred with General Cadorna.

About September 8, 1915, the Germans recommenced to attack in the Argonne, where the German Crown Prince had failed to

break the French line in June and July. After a violent artillery preparation, including the use of a large number of asphyxiating shells, two infantry divisions were flung against the French. The Germans rushed the first-line trenches at several points. Strong attacks were launched against them and prevented any further advance.

French and British airmen raided the aviation sheds at Ostend; another air squadron dropped sixty shells on the aviation ground at Saint Medard and on the railway station at Dieuze, in Lorraine, twenty-five miles northeast of Nancy. A bombardment of Zeebrugge by the British fleet caused much damage, the Germans losing forty dead and some hundred wounded. Here the submarine port, with two submersibles and two guns on the harbor wall were destroyed, while the central airship shed, containing at the time two dirigibles, was also severely damaged. The semaphore tower was shot to pieces and some sluices crippled. Perhaps the most exciting incident at this period was the great allied air raid on the Forest of Houlthulst, about halfway between Ypres and Dixmude. The forest was quite sheltered from the ravages of the allied guns, and had been converted into a regular garrison district, with comfortable barracks full of soldiers, provision stores, and large munition depots. The whole camp was brilliantly illuminated with electric light.

At ten o'clock on the night of September 9, 1915, sixty French, British and Belgian aeroplanes started out in clear moonlight. Immediately the aerial flotilla had announced its approach by the well-known buzzing of sixty industrious propellers, the whole neighborhood was plunged in sudden darkness. The moon, however, supplied the necessary light to guide the sky raiders to their goal. Besides, French flyers had already photographed the region in broad daylight, so that the situation of the main buildings was thoroughly known to all the pilots. It is stated that four tons of high explosives and incendiary bombs were scattered with deadly effect; some of the aircraft whose stock became exhausted flew back to their base, landed, refilled, and returned to the scene of action—two and three times. The greatest consternation naturally prevailed among the soldiers below, running

in panic-stricken groups to escape from the blasting shower let loose over their heads. Indescribable confusion prevailed; frequent explosions were heard as some aerial missile found a piled-up accumulation of its own kind. By 11.30, an hour and a half after the squadron had set sail, the entire forest and the buildings it contained were in flames. The next morning a German aeroplane, "adorned with sixteen Iron Crosses," was forced to descend near Calais owing to engine trouble and was captured by the French.

By way of reprisals for the continued attacks on Lunéville and Compiègne by German aviators, a squadron of French aeroplanes flew over the German town of Trier (Trèves) on September 13, 1915, and deposited one hundred bombs. After returning to the base and taking on board further supplies, they set out again in the afternoon and dropped fifty-eight shells on the station of Dommary Baroncourt. Other aeros bombarded the railway stations at Donaueschingen on the Danube and at Marbach, where movements of troops had been reported. Activity grew in intensity all along the front. Artillery fighting on the Yser, the north and south of Arras, in the sectors of Neuville, Roclincourt and Mailly. To the north of the Oise the French artillery carried out a destructive fire on the German defenses and the works of Beuvraignes. Infantry attacks occurred in front of Andrechy. On the canal from the Aisne to the Marne the French bombarded the trenches, batteries and cantonments of the Germans in the environs of Sapigneul and of Neuville, near Berry-au-Bac. Grenade engagements took place near the Bethune-Arras road and north of Souchez. South of the Somme, before Fay, there were constant and stubborn mine duels, while fierce bombardments in the sectors of Armancourt (southwest of Compiègne), Beuvraignes (south of Roye), as well as on the plateau of Quennevières (northeast of Compiègne) and Nouvron (northwest of Soissons), continued uninterruptedly. In Champagne and in the Argonne also, long range artillery fighting rent the air.

On the Lorraine front, in the environs of Embermenil, Leintrey, and Ancerviller, near Lunéville, the German trenches

and works were subjected to heavy fire. Poison shells and liquid fire played an important part in the furious fighting that was gradually developing in the Vosges, and assisted the Germans to gain some initial successes. On the Lingekopf-Barrenkopf front the French were driven out of a first-line trench on the Schratzmannele, but they recovered most of the ground by a counterattack. Similarly on the summit of the Hartmannsweilerkopf, where the Germans had also obtained a footing in the French trenches, they were subsequently ejected again. These trenches had been captured with the aid of blazing liquids. Our first knowledge of this "blazing liquid" (outside of Germany) was derived from a document which fell into French hands early in the war. It was Note 32 of the Second Army, dated October 16, 1914, at St. Quentin. In it were published the following instructions under the heading of "Arms at the disposal of Pioneers (Sappers) for fighting at close quarters":

"The flame projectors (Flammenwerfer), which are very similar to portable fire extinguishers, are worked by specially trained pioneers and throw a liquid which at once catches fire spontaneously. The jet of fire has an effective range of 30 meters. The effect is immediate and deadly, and the great heat developed forces the enemy back a long way. As they burn from one and a half to two minutes, and can be stopped whenever necessary, short and isolated jets of flame are advisable, so that one charge is sufficient to spray several objectives. Flame projectors will be mainly employed in street and house-to-house fighting, and will be kept in readiness at the place from which an attack starts."

There is no doubt that some engines of this nature were employed by the Germans during August and September, 1914, to destroy portions of the towns and villages destroyed by them. One captured apparatus, actually examined, comprised a portable reservoir for holding the inflammable liquid and the means of spraying it. The former, which is carried strapped on to a man's back, is a steel cylinder containing oil and compressed air in separate chambers. The latter consists of a suitable length of

metal pipe fitted with universal joints and a nozzle capable of rotation in any direction. When a valve is turned on, the air pressure forces the oil out of the nozzle in a fine spray for a distance of over twenty yards. The oil is ignited automatically at the nozzle and continues to issue in a sheet of flame until the air pressure falls too low or the oil is exhausted. The heat given out is terrific in its intensity. A similar method employed by the German troops consists of a liquid substance which is squirted into the trenches. Bombs are then thrown which on explosion ignite the fluid. Yet another sort of projectile took the form of an incendiary bomb or shell which was discharged noiselessly, possibly from a catapult. It bursts on impact, tearing a hole and burning a circle of ground about eight feet in diameter.

By the middle of the month, September, 1915, the liveliest activity obtained everywhere in the west—each side apparently doing its utmost to harass the other. Nothing of a definite nature was achieved by either. The Germans were merely sitting tight along most of the line while taking the offensive only in those sectors where they had reason to believe the Allies would attempt to strike the great blow. The Allies, on the other hand, endeavored to weaken their opponents as much as possible in order to create an easier passage for the great "drive" they contemplated. The innumerable engagements about this time throughout the western theatre of the war form a bewildering conflict of unconnected and minor battles and skirmishes. When, years hence, the "official" histories are written and published, the student may be able to read the riddle and trace some thread of continuity and intention through the labyrinth of these operations. For the present they must be regarded as mere incidents in the overture leading to a great battle. The actions were described from day to day with some detail by the Allies, and as "unimportant attempts" by the German official communiqués. The latter generally consisted of few words that gave little or no indication of what had happened, and frequently wound up with the phrase: "There was no change on the front." The following translation may be given as a typical example: "The French

attempted an attack but were repulsed by our fire. An enemy aeroplane was shot down. We successfully attacked in the Argonne. The situation is unchanged."

On September 18, 1915, the British fleet again bombarded the German defenses on the Belgian coast, in conjunction with the British artillery in the Nieuport district. Unabated fighting raged along the whole front, and it was all summed up in the German official communiqué of September 20, 1915, with commendable brevity:

"The hostile vessels which unsuccessfully bombarded Westende and Middelkerke, southwest of Ostend, withdrew before our fire. Several hits were observed. Along the land front there were no important events."

Nevertheless, important events were shaping themselves about this time. German artillery attacks increased in violence against the British front. Aeroplanes were particularly busy observing all moves on the board. In Champagne the Germans kept the French occupied with heavy shells and "lachrymatory projectiles." These projectiles have been described as "tearful and wonderful engines of war." They are ordinary hand grenades with a charge that rips open the grenade and liberates a liquid chemical. When that happens, the effect of the fumes brings water to the eyes of the men in such quantities that they are quite unable to defend themselves in the event of an attack. Shooting is entirely out of the question. The stinging sensation produced in the eyes is not pleasant, but it is not painful, and the effect wears off in a few minutes. The troops humorously refer to these grenades as "onions."

On September 21, 1915, a party of French airmen carried out the most daring of the many raids on German towns and positions they had hitherto accomplished. An aero squadron flew to Stuttgart, which is about 140 miles due east from Nancy, and dropped thirty shells on the palace of the King of Württemberg and the railway station of the town. They were fired at from many points, but safely completed their double journey of nearly 300 miles. Before this exploit, which was undertaken as a reprisal, the longest distances traveled by raiding squadrons of

French aeroplanes were those to the Friedrichshafen Zeppelin factories on June 28, 1915, involving a double journey of 240 miles from Belfort; and to the explosives factory at Ludwigshafen, on the Rhine, which represented a distance of 230 miles from Nancy and back. The Berlin official report thus describes the event:

"At 8.15 this morning enemy airmen with German marks on their aeros attacked Stuttgart and dropped several bombs on the town, killing four persons and wounding a number of soldiers and civilians. The material damage was quite unimportant."

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT CHAMPAGNE OFFENSIVE

THE day fixed for the opening of the Allies' long-projected offensive dawned on September 22, 1915. Gigantic preparations had been in the making. Large drafts of fresh British troops had been poured into France, which enabled Sir John French to take over the defense of a portion of the lines hitherto held by General Joffre's men. Defensive organizations had been improved all round; immense supplies of munitions had been accumulated; units had been carefully regrouped and new ones created; all that skill, foresight and arduous toil could accomplish had been attained. The spirit of the human fighting material was all that could be desired. In order not to interrupt the course of the narrative later, we insert here the interesting general order that the French commander in chief issued to his troops on September 23, 1915, when it was read to the regiments by their officers:

"Soldiers of the Republic:

"After months of waiting, which have enabled us to increase our forces and our resources, while the adversary has been using up his own, the hour has come to attack and conquer and to add

fresh glorious pages to those of the Marne and Flanders, the Vosges and Arras.

"Behind the whirlwind of iron and fire let loose, thanks to the factories of France, where your brothers have, night and day, worked for us, you will proceed to the attack, all together, on the whole front, in close union with the armies of our allies.

"Your *élan* will be irresistible. It will carry you at a bound up to the batteries of the adversary, beyond the fortified lines which he has placed before you.

"You will give him neither pause nor rest until victory has been achieved.

"Set to with all your might for the deliverance of the soil of la Patrie, for the triumph of justice and liberty.

"J. JOFFRE."

The general outlines of the plan of campaign may be briefly described: The British were to deliver a main attack on the German trenches between Lens and La Bassée, in close cooperation with the French on their immediate right in Artois, and to hold the enemy by secondary attacks and demonstrations on the rest of the (British) front, about eighty miles. The French, for their part, took in hand the two principal operations—to batter through in Artois and to exert their mightiest efforts in Champagne.

To a proper understanding of a campaign or a battle, some knowledge of the topographical conditions is essential. The chief scene in the act—where the grand attack falls—is the beautiful vineyard region of Champagne. Here the German front is the same as they established and fortified it after the Battle of the Marne. It rests on the west side on the Massif de Moronvillers; to the east it stretches as far as the Argonne. It was intended to cover the railroad from Challerange to Bazancourt, a line indispensable for the concentration movements of the German troops. The offensive front, which extends from Auberive to the east of Ville-sur-Tourbe, presents a varied aspect. From east to west may be seen, firstly, a glacis or sloping bank about five miles wide and covered with little woods. The road

THE CHAMPAGNE DISTRICT

from Saint-Hilaire to Saint-Souplet, with the Baraque de l'Epine de Vedegrange, marks approximately its axis.

(2) The hollow, in which lies the pretty village of Souain and where the first German line follows its edge. The road from Souain to Pomme-Py describes the radius of this semicircle. The farm of Navarin stands on the top of the hills two miles north of Souain.

(3) To the north of Perthes, a comparatively tranquil region of uniform aspect, forming between the wooded hills of the Trou Bricot and those of the Butte du Mesnil a passage two miles wide, barred by several lines of trenches and ending at a series of heights—the Butte de Souain, Hills 195 and 201 and the Butte de Tahure, surmounted by the second German line.

(4) To the north of Mesnil, a very strong position, bastioned on the west by two twin heights (Mamelle Nord and Trapèze), on the east by the Butte du Mesnil. The German trenches form a powerful curtain between these two bastions, behind which a thickly wooded undulating region extends as far as Tahure.

(5) To the north of Beauséjour, a bare terrain easily traversable, with a gentle rise in the direction of Ripon to the farms of Maisons de Champagne.

(6) To the north of Massiges, hills numbered 191 and 199, describing on the map the figure of a hand, very strongly fortified and forming the eastern flank of the whole German line. This table-land slopes down gently in the direction of Ville-sur-Tourbe.

As to the German defenses, the French were intimately acquainted with every detail. They had maps showing every defensive work, trench, alley of communication, and clump of trees in the landscape. Each of these features had been given a special name or number preceded by a certain letter, according to the sector of attack wherein it was situated. These details had been laboriously collected by aviators and spies, and applied with minute precision.

On the morning of September 22, 1915, the French accelerated their long-sustained bombardment of the German positions with intense fury, continuing day and night without a break until

the 25th. The direct object of this preparatory cannonade was to destroy the wire entanglements, bury the defenders in their dugouts, raze the trenches, smash the embrasures, and stop up the alleys of communication. The range included not only the first trench line, but also the supporting trench and the second position, though the last was so far distant as to make accurate observation difficult. The heavy long-range guns shelled the headquarters, the cantonments and the railroad stations. They speedily demolished the permanent way, thereby stopping all traffic in reenforcements, munitions and commissariat. From letters and notes afterwards found upon German prisoners who came out alive from that inferno, one may gather an approximate idea of what the bombardment was like:

"September 23.

"The French artillery fired without intermission from the morning of the 21st to the evening of the 23rd, and we all took refuge in our dugouts. On the evening of the 22d we were to have gone to get some food, but the French continued to fire on our trenches. In the evening we had heavy losses, and we had nothing to eat."

"September 24.

"For the last two days the French have been firing like mad. To-day, for instance, a dugout has been destroyed. There were sixteen men in it. Not one of them managed to save his skin. They are all dead. Besides that, a number of individual men have been killed and there are a great mass of wounded. The artillery fires almost as rapidly as the infantry. A mist of smoke hangs over the whole battle front, so that it is impossible to see anything. Men are dropping like flies. The trenches are no longer anything but a mound of ruins."

"September 24.

"A rain of shells is pouring down upon us. The kitchen and everything that is sent to us is bombarded at night. The field kitchens no longer come to us. Oh, if only the end were near! That is the cry everyone is repeating."

"September 25.

"I have received no news, and probably shall not receive any for some days. The whole postal service has been stopped; all

places have been bombarded to such an extent that no human being could stand against it. The railway line is so seriously damaged that the train service for some time has been completely stopped. We have been for three days in the first line; during those three days the French have fired so heavily that our trenches are no longer visible."

"September 25.

"We have passed through some terrible hours. It was as though the whole world were in a state of collapse. We have had heavy losses. One company of 250 men had sixty killed last night. A neighboring battery had sixteen killed yesterday. The following instance will show you the frightful destructiveness of the French shells: A dugout five meters deep, surrounded by two meters fifty centimeters of earth and two thicknesses of heavy timber, was broken like a match."

Report made on September 24, 1915, in the morning, by the captain commanding the Third Company of the 135th Regiment of Reserves:

"The French are firing on us with great bombs and machine guns. We must have reenforcements at once. Many men are no longer fit for anything. It is not that they are wounded, but they are Landsturmers. Moreover the wastage is greater than the losses announced. Send rations immediately; no food has reached us to-day. Urgently want illuminating cartridges and hand grenades. Is the hospital corps never coming to fetch the wounded? I urgently beg for reenforcements; the men are dying from fatigue and want of sleep. I have no news of the battalion."

The time fixed for all the attacks on the Champagne front was 9.15 a. m., September 25, 1915. Just before the assault General Joffre issued the following brief order:

"The offensive will be carried on without truce and without respite.

"Remember the Marne—Victory or death."

Punctual to the moment the troops climbed out of their trenches with the aid of steps or scaling ladders and drew up in line before making a rush at the German trenches. The operation was rapidly effected. The German position was at an average

distance of 220 yards; at the word of command the troops broke into a steady trot and covered that ground without any serious loss. The honor of the first assault was granted to the dare-devil Colonial Corps, men hardened in the building up of France's African Empire, and to the Moroccan troops, famous for fierce and obstinate fighting. The men tore across the ground to the assault, led by their commander, General Marchand, of Fashoda fame, who left the army at the age of forty-four but volunteered immediately on the outbreak of the war, and was given command of the Colonial Brigade. General Marchand fell in the charge with a dangerous shell wound in the abdomen. The men dashed on to the German trench line, stirring the rain-drenched, chalky soil to foam beneath their feet. Under the leadership of General Baratier, Marchand's right-hand man in his colonial conquests, the French Colonial Cavalry played an important part in the charge. This was the first time for many months that cavalry really came into action on the western front. They lost heavily, but their activities probably explain the great number of prisoners captured in so short a time.

At nearly every point the Germans were taken completely by surprise, for their defensive fire was not opened until after the flowing tide of the invaders had passed by. This was due neither to lack of courage nor of vigilance, but to the demoralizing effect on the nerves of the defenders by the terrific cannonade, which in all such cases induces a sort of helpless apathy.

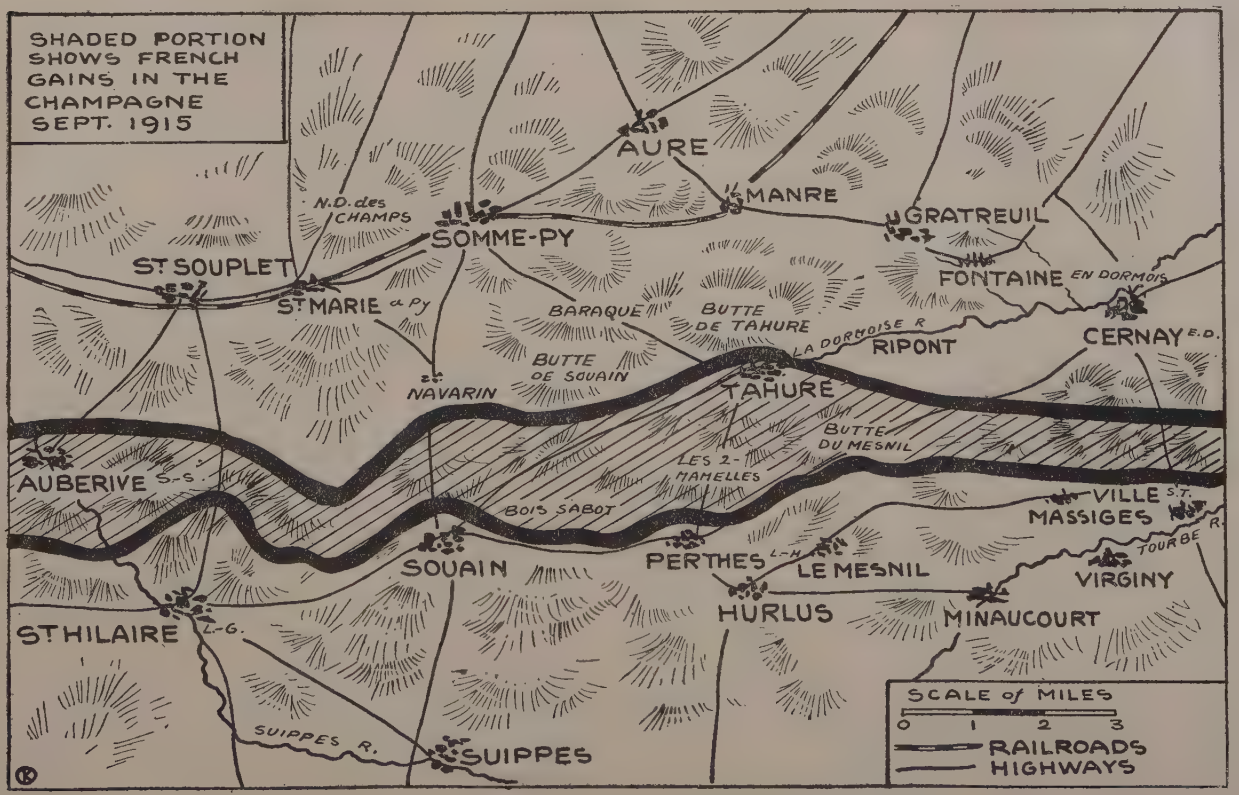
The French actually penetrated into the first German trench over the whole attacking front at one rush; after that their progress met with fiercer resistance and varying checks. While certain units continued their advance with remarkable rapidity, others encountered machine guns still in action and either stopped or advanced with extreme difficulty. Some centers of the German resistance maintained their position for several hours; some even for days. A line showing the different stages of the French advance in Champagne would assume a curiously winding shape, and would reveal on one hand the defensive power of an adversary resolved to hold his ground at all costs,

and on the other the mathematically successful continuity of the French efforts in this hand-to-hand struggle.

The Battle of Champagne must be considered in the light of a series of assaults, executed at the same moment, in parallel or convergent directions and having for their object either the capture or the hemming in of the first German position, the units being instructed to re-form in a continuous line before the second position. In order to follow the development clearly, the terrain must be divided into several sectors, in each of which the operations, although closely coordinated, assumed, as a consequence either of the nature of the ground or of the peculiarities of the German defenses, a different character. The unity of the action was nevertheless insured by the simultaneity of the rush, which carried all the troops beyond the first position, past the batteries, to the defenses established by the Germans on the heights to the south of Py. At the two extremities of the French attacking front, where the advance was subjected to converging fires and to counterattacks on the flanks, the offensive practically failed—or at least made no progress. The fighting that took place in Auberive and round about Servon was marked by several heroic features, but it led to no further result than to hold and immobilize the German forces on the wings while the attack was progressing in the center.

In accordance with the proposed arrangement of divisions into sectors, we will take as Number—

(1) The sector of the Epine de Vedegrange: Here the first German line was established at the base of a wide glacis covered with clumps of trees, and formed a series of salients running into each other. At certain points it ran along the edge of the woods where the supplementary defenses were completed by abatis. The position as a whole between Auberive and Souain described a vast triangle. To the west of the road from Saint-Hilaire to Saint-Souplet, the troops traversed the first German line and rushed forward for a distance of about 1,200 yards as far as a supporting trench, in front of which they were stopped by wire entanglements. A counterattack debouching from the west and supported by the artillery of Moronvillers caused a



DETAIL MAP OF BATTLE IN CHAMPAGNE, SEPTEMBER, 1915

slight retirement of the French left. The troops on the right, on the contrary, held their gains and succeeded on the following days in increasing and extending them, remaining in touch with the units which were attacking on the east of the road. The latter had succeeded in a brilliant manner in overcoming the difficulties that faced them. The German position which they captured, with its triple and quadruple lines of trenches, its small forts armed with machine guns, its woods adapted for the defensive purpose in view, constituted one of the most complete schemes of defense on the Champagne front and afforded cover to a numerous artillery concealed in the woods of the glacis. On this front, about three miles wide, the attack on September 25, 1915, achieved a mixed success. The troops on the left, after having penetrated into the first trench, had their progress arrested by machine guns. On the right, however, in spite of obstacles presented by four successive trenches, each of which was covered by a network of wire entanglements and was concealed in the woods, where the French artillery had difficulty in reaching them, the attacking troops gained about one and one-half miles, took 700 prisoners and captured seven guns.

The advance here recommenced on September 27, 1915. The left took possession of the woods lining the road from Saint-Hilaire to Saint-Souplet as far as the Epine de Vedegrange. Along the whole extent of the wooded heights as far as the western side of the hollow at Souain the success was identical. Notwithstanding the losses they sustained and the fatigue involved in the incessant fighting, the troops pushed forward, leaving behind them only a sufficient force to clear the woods of isolated groups of Germans still remaining there. Between four and six in the afternoon they arrived immediately in front of the second German position. On the same day they penetrated this position at two points, and captured a trench over a thousand yards wide, called the "Parallel of the Epine de Vedegrange," which was duplicated almost throughout by another trench (the parallel of the wood of Chevron). A little farther east the French also penetrated the German trench to a depth of about 450 yards. But it was impossible to take advantage of this

breach owing to a concentration of the heavy German artillery, a rapidly continued defense of the surrounding woods, and the fire of machine guns which could not be approached. These guns were planted in the trenches on the right and left of the entry and exit of the breach. The results attained by the French in this sector alone amounted to fifteen square miles of territory organized for defenses throughout nearly the whole of its extent. On September 28, 1915, they also took over 3,000 prisoners and forty-four cannon.

(2) Sector of Souain: The German lines round about Souain described a wide curve. Close to the French trenches, to the west at the Mill and to the east at the wood of Sabot, they swerved to the extent of about a mile to the north of the village and of the source of the Ain.

When the offensive was decided upon it was necessary, in order to extend the French lines forward to striking distance, to undertake sapping operations in parallel lines, and at times to make dashes by night over the intervening ground. The men working underground got into communication with the trenches by digging alleys of communication. Under the eyes and the fire of the Germans this difficult undertaking was carried out with very slight loss. These parallel lines approached to within a distance of 150 yards of the German trenches. The assault was made in three different directions: on the west in the direction of Hills 167 and 174; in the center along a line running parallel with the road from Souain to Pomme-Py, in the direction of the farm of Navarin; on the east in the direction of the woods intersected by the road from Souain to Tahure, and in the direction of the Butte de Souain. The advance was extremely rapid—on the left over 2,000 yards in less than an hour, in the center over 3,000 yards in forty-five minutes. At 10 a. m. the French had reached the farm of Navarin. Toward the east the forward march was more difficult. Some German machine guns stood their ground in the wood of Sabot and enormously strengthened the German resistance. This defense was eventually overcome by surrounding them. Arriving at the wooded region in that part where it is intersected by the road mentioned

above, the assailants joined up on the 27th with those of their comrades who were attacking to the north of Perthes. They left behind them here, also, only sufficient men to clear the woods of stragglers.

Parlementaires were sent to the Germans, who received them with a volley of rifle shots and endeavored to escape during the night. The majority were killed and the survivors surrendered. Several batteries and a large quantity of war material remained to the French. On the 28th, along the entire length of the sector, they were immediately in front of the second German line.

(3) Sector of Perthes: Between Souain and Perthes stretches a wooded region in which heavy fighting had already taken place in February and March. At that time the French had contrived to take possession of the German defenses of the wood of Sabot on the eastern extremity of this region. They had also made some progress to the northwest of Perthes, on the summit of Hill 200. But between these two positions the Germans had retained a strong system of trenches forming a salient almost triangular in shape, which the French nicknamed "la Poche" (the Pocket). During the whole year a war of mining had been going on, and the region, which was broken up by concave constructions and intersected in all directions by trenches and alleys of communication, constituted an attacking ground all the more difficult because to the north of la Poche the rather thickly-wooded Trou Bricot, the edges of which had been put in a state of defense, obstructed a rapid advance. This wooded region extends over a width of more than a mile. The arrangements made for the attack contemplated, after the capture of la Poche, the surrounding of the woods of the Trou Bricot. The junction was to be made at the road from Souain to Tahure, with the troops assigned for the attack on the eastern border of the hollow at Souain.

The ground to the east of the Trou Bricot was less difficult. Open and comparatively flat it was defended on the north of Perthes by a triple line of trenches distant 100 yards from each other. At a distance of 1,000 to 1,200 yards a supporting

trench, called the "York trench," was almost unique in its entire construction. The open country beyond stretched for a distance of two and one-half miles up to the second German position (Hill 195, Butte de Tahure). The principal effort was directed against this passage, the left flank of attack being secured by a subsidiary action confined to the capture of la Poche.

At 9 a. m. the French artillery directed their fire successively against the first-line trenches and the supporting trenches. The attack took place in perfect order. The infantry were already swarming into the German trenches when the German artillery opened its defensive fire. The French counterbatteries hampered the German pieces and the reserves in the rear suffered little from their fire. At 9.45 a. m. the two columns which were attacking the extremities of the salient of la Poche joined hands. The position was surrounded. Those Germans who remained alive inside it surrendered. At the same time a battalion was setting foot in the defenses of the southern edges of the wood of Trou Bricot. The battalion that followed, marching to the outside of the eastern edges, executed with perfect regularity a "left turn" and came and formed up alongside the communication alleys as far as the supporting trench. At the same moment, in the open country to the north of Perthes, the French troops surmounted the three first-line trenches and, preceded by artillery, made a quick march to the York trench and occupied it almost without striking a blow.

Farther to the east, along the road from Perthes to Tahure, the French advance encountered greater difficulties. Some centers of the German resistance could not be overcome. A sheltered machine gun continued its fire. An infantry officer, with a petty officer of artillery, succeeded in getting a gun into action at a distance of over 300 yards from the machine gun and firing at it at close quarters. Of the troops that were advancing to the north of Perthes, some made for the eastern border of the wood of Bricot, where they penetrated into the camps, ousting the defenders and surprising several officers in bed. Late in the afternoon a French regiment had reached the road from Souain to Tahure. Other units were marching

straight toward the north, clearing out the little woods on the way. They there captured batteries of which the artillerymen were "riveted to their guns by means of bayonets." The same work of clearance was meanwhile being performed in the woods extending east of the road from Perthes to Souain and Tahure, where batteries were charged and captured while in action. At this spot a regiment covered three miles in two hours and captured ten guns. From midday onward the rate of progress slackened, the bad weather making it impossible for the French artillery to see what was going on, and rendering the joining up movements extremely difficult. From the Buttes de Souain and Tahure the Germans directed converging fires on the French, who were advancing there along very open ground. Nevertheless, they continued their advance as far as the slopes of Hill 193 and the Butte de Tahure and there dug themselves in.

The night passed without any German counterattack. In the darkness the French artillery brought forward their heavy pieces and several field batteries which had arrived immediately after the attack beyond the York trench. At dawn the reconstituted regiments made another forward rush which enabled them to establish themselves in immediate contact with the second German position from the Butte de Souain to the Butte de Tahure, and even to seize several advanced posts in the neighborhood. But on the lower slopes some of the wire entanglements remained intact; a successful assault on them would have been possible only after a fresh artillery preparation. Up to October 6, 1915, the troops remained where they were, digging trenches and organizing a defensive system which had to be constructed all over again on ground devastated by German fire.

(4) Sector of Le Mesnil: It was to the north of Le Mesnil that the French encountered the greatest German resistance. In the course of the engagements of the preceding winter the French had succeeded in securing a foothold on top of the hill numbered 196. The Germans remained a little to the east, in the "Ravin des Cuisines" (Ravine of the Kitchens). This the French now took by assault, but could get no farther. The German trenches, constructed on the northern slopes of Hill 196, were so con-

cealed from field observation that it was difficult for the artillery to reach them. They were furthermore flanked on one side by the twin heights of the Mamelles, and on the other by the Butte du Mesnil. Some French units managed to penetrate into the trenches to the eastward on the 25th, but a counterattack and flank fires dislodged them again. To the west they did not capture the northern Mamelle till the night of October 1-2, 1915, thereby surrounding the trapeze works that surmounted the southern Mamelle.

(5) Sector of Beauséjour: The French attacks launched north of Beauséjour met with more conspicuous success. Throwing themselves on the first German lines the swarming invaders rapidly captured the defense works in the woods of Fer de Lance and Demi-Lune, and afterwards all the works known as the Bastion. Certain units won the top of Maisons de Champagne in one rush and darted past several batteries, killing the gunners as they served their pieces. The same movement took them across the intricate region of the mine "funnels" of Beauséjour up to the wood intersected by the road to Maisons de Champagne. There they encountered German artillerymen in the act of unlimbering their guns. They killed the drivers and the horses; the survivors surrendered.

Farther westward the left wing of the attacking force advanced with greater difficulty, being hampered by the small forts and covered works with which the trenches were everywhere protected. At this moment the cavalry unexpectedly came to the support of the infantry. Two squadrons of hussars galloped against the German batteries north of Maisons de Champagne in the teeth of a fierce artillery fire. They nevertheless reached that part of the lines where the Germans still held their ground. Machine guns rattled against the cavalry, dropping many of their horses. The hussars dismounted and, with drawn sabers, made a rush for the trenches. Favored by this diversion the infantry simultaneously resumed their forward movement. The German resistance broke down, and more than 600 were taken prisoners. Later in the day of the 25th some German counterattacks were made from the direction of Ripon, but

failed to drive the French from the Maisons de Champagne summit. During the next few days a desperate struggle ensued north of the summit in the vicinity of a defensive work called the "Ouvrage de la Defaite," which the French took by storm, lost it again, then recovered it, and finally were driven out by a severe bombardment.

(6) Sector of Massiges: The safety of the French troops which had advanced to the wood and the Maisons de Champagne was assured by the capture of the heights of Massiges. This sharply undulating upland (199 on the north and 191 on the south) formed a German stronghold that was believed to be impregnable. From the top they commanded the French positions in several directions. The two first attacking parties marched out in columns at 9.15 a. m., preceded by field-artillery fire. In fifteen minutes they had reached the summit. Then their difficulties began. In the face of a withering rifle and machine-gun fire they could proceed but slowly along the summits by the communication alleys, blasting their way through with hand grenades, and supported by the artillery, which was constantly kept informed of their movements by means of flag signals. The Germans surrendered in large numbers as the grenadiers advanced. The French formed an uninterrupted, ever-lengthening chain of grenade-bearers in the communication alleys, just as buckets of water were passed from hand to hand at fires in former times. This chain started from Massiges and each fresh arrival of grenades at the other end was accompanied by a further advance.

The fight continued in this manner from September 25, 1915, to October 3, 1915, with fierce perseverance against stubborn opposition. The Germans poured a continuous stream of reenforcements into the section and offered a resistance that has rarely been equaled for obstinacy and courage. According to French reports, they stood up to be shot down—the machine-gun men at their guns, the grenadiers on their grenade chests. Every attempt at counterattacking failed them. Having the heights of Massiges in their possession enabled the French to extend their gains toward Ville-sur-Tourbe, while taking in

flank those trenches they had failed to capture by a frontal attack. The loss of these heights seemed to have particularly disturbed the German General Staff. It was at first denied in the official reports, and then explained that the ground had been abandoned owing to artillery fire, whereas the French Headquarters Staff claimed that they had captured the ground mainly by hand-grenade fighting at close quarters.

The Battle of Champagne presents a number of curious aspects. How came the Germans to be so overwhelmingly surprised? Beyond all doubt, they expected a great French offensive. In the orders of the day issued by General von Ditfurth on August 15, 1915—five weeks before the French attack began—we read, "The possibility of a great French offensive must be considered." General von Fleck was rather late: on September 26, 1915, when the French had already taken nearly the whole first-line trenches, he expressed the opinion that "The French Higher Command appears to be disposed to make another desperate effort." What is tolerably certain is that the German General Staff did not foresee the strength of the blow nor suspect the vigor with which it would be delivered. Even the command on the battle field itself apparently failed to recognize what was happening before their eyes. Inside the shelters of the second line two German officers were placidly enjoying the delights of morning in bed, when they were disturbed by noises which it was beyond their wits to account for. The door of their little house was rudely thrust open and excited voices said rude things in French. Then bayonets made their appearance, and soldiers, hot and breathing hard after their steeplechase across the German trenches, pulled the officers from their beds with scant respect, informing them briefly that they were prisoners. This was the first intimation which the stupefied officers received that the enemy had broken through their lines.

They seemed to have had an excessive confidence in the strength of their first line, and the interruption of telephonic communications had prevented their being informed of the rapid French advance. Then as to the disposition and employment of

reserves: Here it looks as though that perfect organization and semi-infallible precision which characterize the German army had, for the nonce, gone awry in the Champagne conflict. In order to make up for the insufficiency of the local reserves the German military authorities had to put in line not only the important units which they held at their disposal behind the front (Tenth Corps brought back from Russia), but the local reserves from other sectors (Soissons, Argonne, the Woevre, Alsace), which were dispatched to Champagne one battalion after another, and even in groups of double companies. Ill provided with food and munitions, the reenforcements were pushed to battle on an unknown terrain without indication as to the direction they had to take and without their junction with neighboring units having been arranged. Through the haste with which the reserves were thrown under the fire of the French artillery and infantry—already in possession of the positions—the German losses must have been increased enormously. A letter taken from a soldier of the 118th Regiment may be cited as corroborative evidence: "We were put in a motor car and proceeded at a headlong pace to Tahure, by way of Vouziers. Two hours' rest in the open air with rain falling, and then we had a six hours' march to take up our positions. On our way we were greeted by the fire of the enemy shells, so that, for instance, out of 280 men of the second company only 224 arrived safe and sound inside the trenches. These trenches, freshly dug, were barely thirty-five to fifty centimeters (12 to 17 in.) deep. Continually surrounded by mines and bursting shells, we had to remain in them and do the best we could with them for 118 hours without getting anything hot to eat. Hell itself could not be more terrible. To-day, at about 12 noon, 600 men, fresh troops, joined the regiment. In five days we had lost as many and more."

The disorder in which the reenforcements were engaged appears strongly from this fact: On only that part of the front included between Maisons de Champagne and Hill 189 there were on October 2, 1915, no fewer than thirty-two different battalions belonging to twenty-one different regiments. During the

days following the French rush through the first line, the Germans seemed to have but one idea, to strengthen their second line to stem the advance. Their counterattacks were concentrated on a comparatively unimportant part of the battle front in certain places, the loss of which appeared to them to be particularly dangerous. Therefore on the heights of Massiges the German military authorities hurled in succession isolated battalions of the 123d, 124th and 120th regiments; of the Thirtieth Regular Regiment and of the Second Regiment Ersatz Reserve (Sixteenth Corps), which were in turn decimated, for these counterattacks, hastily and crudely prepared, all ended in sanguinary failures. It was not the men who failed their leaders, for they fought like tigers when reasonable opportunities were offered them.

That strong offensive capacity of the Germans seemed also, on the occasion, to have broken down. General von Ditfurth's order of the day bears witness to this: "It seemed to me that the infantry at certain points was confining its action to a mere defensive. . . . I cannot protest too strongly against such an idea, which necessarily results in destroying the spirit of offensive in our own troops and in arousing and strengthening in the mind of the enemy a feeling of his superiority. The enemy is left full liberty of action and our action is subjected to the will of the enemy."

It is of course impossible to estimate precisely what the German losses were. There are certain known details, however, which may serve to indicate their extent. One underofficer declared that he was the only man remaining out of his company. A soldier of the third battalion of the 123d Regiment, engaged on the 26th, stated that his regiment was withdrawn from the front after only two days' fighting because its losses were too great. The 118th Regiment relieved the 158th Regiment in the trenches after it had been reduced to fifteen or twenty men per company. Certain units disappeared completely, as for instance the Twenty-seventh Reserve Regiment and the Fifty-second Regular Regiment, which, by the evening of the 25th, had left in French hands the first 13 officers and 933 men, and

the other 21 officers and 927 men. Certain figures may help to arrive at the total losses. At the beginning of September, 1915, the German strength on the Champagne front amounted to seventy battalions. In anticipation of a French attack they brought there, before the 25th, another twenty-nine battalions, making a total of ninety-nine battalions. Reckoning the corresponding artillery and pioneer formations, this would represent 115,000 men directly engaged. The losses due to the artillery preparation and the first attacks were such that from September 25 to October 15, 1915, the German General Staff was compelled to renew its effectives almost in their entirety by sending out ninety-three fresh battalions. It is assumed that the units engaged on September 25-26, 1915, suffered losses amounting to from sixty to eighty per cent (even more for certain corps which had entirely disappeared). The new units brought into line for the counterattacks, and subjected in connection with these to an incessant bombardment, lost fifty per cent of their effectives, if not more. Hence it would be hardly overstating the case to set down 140,000 men as the sum of the German losses in Champagne. It must also be taken into account that of this number the proportion of slightly wounded men able to recuperate quickly and return to the front was, in the case of the Germans, very much below the average proportion of other engagements, for they were unable to collect their wounded. Thus nearly the whole of the troops defending the first position fell into French hands.

After recounting the losses of one side, let us turn to analyze the gains of the other. The French had penetrated the German lines on a front of over fifteen miles, and to a depth of two and a half miles in some places, between Auberive and Ville-sur-Tourbe. The territorial gains may be thus summarized: The troops of the Republic had scaled the whole of the glacis of the Epine de Vedegrange; they occupied the ridge of the hollow at Souain; debouched in the opening to the north of Perthes to the slopes of Hill 195 and as far as the Butte de Tahure; carried the western bastions of the curtain of le Mesnil; advanced as far as Maisons de Champagne and took by assault the "hand" of

Massiges. The territory they had reconquered from the invaders represented an area of about forty square kilometers. On and from October 7, 1915, they beat back the furious efforts of the Germans to regain the lost ground. Nevertheless, in spite of the utmost resolution on the part of commanders, and of valor on the part of the French troops, the Germans were not completely overthrown, and the annihilating results expected from the action of the mass of troops and guns employed were not attained. It was a victory, but an indecisive one.

On October 5, 1915, General Joffre issued the following manifesto from Grand Headquarters:

"The Commander in Chief addresses to the troops under his orders the expression of his profound satisfaction at the results obtained up to the present day by the attacks. Twenty-five thousand prisoners, three hundred and fifty guns, a quantity of material which it has not yet been possible to gauge, are the trophies of a victory the echo of which throughout Europe indicates its importance.

"The sacrifices willingly made have not been in vain. All have been able to take part in the common task. The present is a sure guarantee to us of the future.

"The Commander in Chief is proud to command the finest troops France has ever known."

CHAPTER V

THE BRITISH FRONT IN ARTOIS

EVER since August 16, 1915, a persistent and almost continuous bombardment of the German lines had been carried out by the French and, to a less extent, by the British and Belgian artillery. The allied gunners appear to have distributed their favors quite impartially. There was nothing in the action taken to direct attention to one sector more than to another. The Vosges, the Meurthe and Moselle, Lorraine and the Woevre, the Argonne,

Champagne, the Aisne, the Somme, the Arras sector, Ypres and the Yser, and the Belgian coast where the British navy had joined in, all were subjected to a heavy, deliberate and effective fire from guns of all calibers. As in Champagne, the rate of fire quickened up on September 22, 1915. Great concentrations of guns had been made at various points, and enormous quantities of shells had been collected in readiness for the attack. But the artillery preparation which immediately preceded that attack in the west was of a most terrific description. Shortly after midnight and in the early hours of Saturday morning, September 25, 1915, the German positions were treated to a bombardment that had rarely been equaled in violence. From the Yser Canal down to the end of the French line the Allies' guns took up the note, and soon the whole of the allied line was thundering and reechoing with the infernal racket. The German lines became smothered in dust and smoke, their parapets simply melted away, their barbed-wire entanglements disappeared. Those sleeping thirty or forty miles away were awakened in the night by the dull rumbling. The whole atmosphere was choked with the noise, and so it continued throughout the day with hardly an interval. As if in anticipation of the coming onslaught the German artillery had also raised the key of its fire to a higher pitch several days before.

Simultaneously with the attack in Champagne, Sir John French assumed the offensive on the British front. The main British attack was directed in the neighborhood of Lens, against Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria. While the French troops were rushing the German first line in Champagne, the British troops executed a precisely similar movement south of La Bassée Canal to the east of Grenay and Vermelles. With the first rush they captured the German trenches on a front of five miles, penetrating the lines in some places to a distance of 4,000 yards. They conquered the western outskirts of Hulluch, the village of Loos, with the mining works around it, and Hill 70. They lost the quarries northwest of Hulluch again, but retook them on the following day. Other attacks were made north of the La Bassée Canal, which drew strong German reserves toward these

points of the lines, where hard fighting occurred throughout the day with fluctuating success. The British also made another attack on Hooge on either side of the Menin road. The assault north of the road yielded the Bellewaarde Farm and ridge, but the Germans subsequently recaptured this part. South of the road the attack gained about 600 yards of German trench. The British took 2,600 prisoners, eighteen guns and thirty machine guns in the first day. The Fourth British Army Corps, under Sir Henry Rawlinson, had thus taken Loos and overrun Hill 70, a mile to the east, and even penetrated to Cité St. Auguste. The Fifth Corps, under Sir Hubert Gough, on the left, had stormed the quarries, taken Cité St. Elie, and occupied a portion of the village of Haisnes. But the First Army, in its attack, had not kept adequate reserves on hand; and those at first at the disposal of the general in chief, which had to serve the whole front and to be kept in hand in case of unexpected events, came up too late to enable the British to hold and consolidate all the ground they had won. The Ypres-Arras sector had been more formidably fortified than any other portion of the German front. It is an extremely thickly populated neighborhood, and the terrain is full of difficulties. It could not be expected that an advance here, at least from the outset, could be as rapid as that in Champagne. Whereas in the latter it was a fight for rivers, ridges and woods, in the close country north of Arras the struggle raged in and around villages, houses, and for some particular trench that had to be taken before the French and British could enter the great plain that stretches down to Lille. Every house along that part had been converted into a fortress. When the superstructure had been blown to pieces by shell fire, pioneers burrowed thirty or fifty feet below the cellars and thus held on to the position.

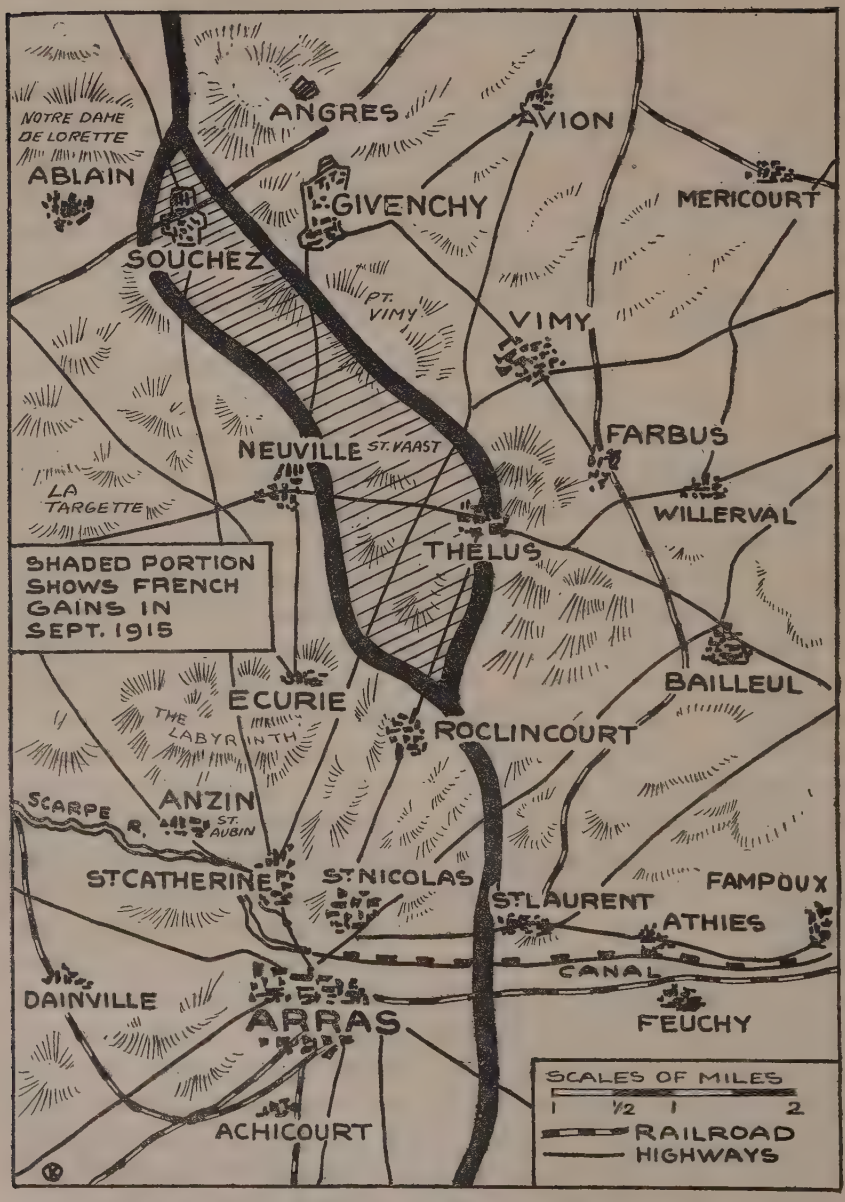
To the right of the British in Artois, the French infantry attack was directed toward the forest of Hache. Only eighty or ninety yards separated the French from the German trenches, and the French infantry, which attained its objective in a few minutes, found the trenches a mass of ruins and almost deserted, and the Germans retreating into the wood. The first wave of

attackers followed in pursuit, but they reached the second line of trenches, situated in the middle of the wood, without meeting any Germans in considerable force. They pushed on to the eastern edge of the wood, but the Germans again put up no defense, and their third-line trenches, on the fringe of the wood, were likewise taken. Then came a halt in the advance. The German commander pulled his men together and, with the reserves which had come up in the meantime, launched a counter-attack against the French, who had quickly established themselves in their newly captured positions. Heavy shells, high explosives and shrapnel were raining in the trenches occupied by the French, and but for the new steel helmets which had recently been supplied, the casualties would have been enormous. One man's helmet was split clean across the crown by a shell splinter, but the man escaped with merely a scratch. The Germans came on in close formations, hurling grenades as they marched. The atmosphere of the wood became almost insupportable with the smoke. Finally, the French hurled a veritable torrent of grenades, which drove the Germans back and compelled them to withdraw across the River Souchez. Boise Hache was entirely won.

The British attack between La Bassée and Lens and the French attack on the Souchez side were admirably coordinated, and were directed mainly to assist the French to gain the heights west of Vimy, which were the unattained object of their efforts during May and June. By September 27, 1915, the French had all Souchez in their hands, and were advancing upon Givenchy. The capture of the Vimy heights was an item of the highest importance, for to the eastward of them all the ground was commanded by their fire, and the chances were that the Germans would fall back on Douai and on the line of the Lille-Douai Canal, once they were pushed off the high ground. In the Argonne the German Crown Prince carried out desperate attacks against the French first-line trenches at La Fille Morte and Bolante. These the French repulsed with heavy losses to the Germans, whose dead lay piled in heaps in front of the positions.

One result of the British attack was the hurried recall of the active Corps of Prussian Guards from the eastern front—an important relief to the hard-pressed Russians. This famous corps was at the time split up into three groups; the active corps was with Mackensen in Galicia and in the advance upon Brest-Litovsk. It was transferred to the Dvina after the fall of Brest, and had since been engaged before Dvinsk. The Reserve Guard Corps was in the central group of the German armies, and the other, the Third Division, was still in Galicia. The British and the Prussian Guards had made each other's acquaintance in the Battle of Ypres.

At the end of the month Haisnes, on the northern flank of the new British line, was still for the greater part in German possession; on the right flank the British were across the Lens-La Bassée road. The British had captured not only the first position of their enemy, but also a second or supporting line which ran west of Loos. They were now up against the third line. Sir John French reported having taken so far over 3,000 prisoners, twenty-one guns, and forty machine guns. The French in Artois had taken a matter of 15,000 prisoners and a number of guns. After obstinate day and night fighting they had reached Hill 140, the culminating point of the crests of Vimy, and the orchards to the south. The crown prince still plugged away on this front with heavy artillery and aerial torpedoes. Columns of flames began to issue from his trenches on September 27, 1915—the inflammable liquid appeared to be a composition of tar and petrol—and the smoke and flames, carried by the wind blowing from the German trenches, soon reached the French line and made the atmosphere intolerably hot and suffocating for the French troops. Then suddenly out of the thick fumes began to appear German infantry with fixed bayonets, sent forward to the attack. They were literally mown down by the fire from the French machine guns and rifles, but the wave of attackers seemed unending, and by dint of overwhelming numbers it poured into the French trenches. A terrible hand-to-hand fight then ensued in an atmosphere so thick that it was difficult to distinguish friend from foe. These clouds were not



THE FRENCH GAINS IN THE ARTOIS REGION, SEPTEMBER, 1915

poisonous, for the Germans had themselves to fight in them; they were let loose to cover the infantry charge.

The French were compelled to retire, which they did, contesting every foot of ground. Meanwhile, reenforcements had arrived and these were at once thrown into the fighting line. The French, however, were soon brought to a halt. Asphyxiating and lachrymatory bombs, which emitted bluish smoke as they exploded, began to fall in their midst. Spurred on by their leaders the men dashed on, passing through yet another of these barriers of smoke until they came to grips with the attackers, who were now coming on like a torrent, in close formation, shouting wildly. Altogether, the scene was one that vividly brings to the imagination the truth of Sherman's dictum that "war is hell." A mad potpourri of dimly visible forms, struggling like demons, shooting, stabbing, hacking and roaring in an infernal caldron of tar, poison, sulphur, tears and blood. Truly a worthy theme for another Dante and a Gustave Doré. For some time it looked as if the French would be crumpled up, but reserves were steadily streaming in, and eventually the attackers began to waver and fall back. The French 75-millimeter Creusots came into play again, and after a battle that lasted in all twenty-four hours, the Germans were driven back to their own trenches.

In the morning of October 2, 1915, the Germans made a demonstration in front of the Belgian trenches at Dixmude, consisting of a bombardment and a violent discharge of bombs. On one small section alone 400 bombs were dropped. The German infantry broke into the Belgian trenches, but were dislodged again in a few minutes.

The position which the British had captured was exceptionally strong, consisting of a double line, including some large redoubts and a network of trenches and bomb-proof shelters. Dugouts were constructed at short intervals all along the line, some of them being large caves thirty feet below the ground. The French capture of Souchez was an event of considerable importance, for the German High Command had issued orders for this section to hold on to the last, that it was to be retained at all costs. The road to the Douai plain was to be barred to the French, who

had to be held back behind the advanced works of the Artois plateau. In May, 1915, the problem was to prevent the French setting foot on the summits of Notre Dame de Lorette and of the Topart Mill. The Germans sacrificed many thousands of men with this object, but the French nevertheless made themselves masters of the heights which the Germans considered of capital importance, and dislodged them from Carency and Ablain-St. Nazaire. There remained only one stage to cover—the Souchez Valley—to reach the last crest which dominated the whole country to the east, and beyond which the ground is flat. This task had been accomplished during the last few days of September and the beginning of October. Souchez and its advanced bastion, the Château Carleul, had been made into a formidable fortification by the changing of the course of the Carency streams. The Germans had transformed the marshy ground to the southeast of this front into a perfect swamp, which was regarded as impassable. The German batteries posted at Angres were able to enfilade the valley on the north. From behind the crest of Hill 119 to Hill 140, which were covered with trenches connected by a network of communication trenches, many batteries were engaged against the French in the district of Notre Dame de Lorette, Ablain-St. Nazaire and Carency. To the north of Souchez the German trenches were still clinging to the Notre Dame de Lorette slope.

The attack of September 25, 1915, was to overcome all these obstacles. The artillery preparation, which lasted five days, was so skillfully handled that, even before it was finished, many German deserters came into the French lines declaring that they had had enough. The infantry attack was delivered at noon on September 25, 1915, and with one rush the French troops reached the objectives which had been marked out for them—the château and grounds of Carleul and the islet south of Souchez. Meanwhile, other detachments carried the cemetery and forced their way to the first slopes of Hill 119. On the left the French troops advanced down the slopes of Notre Dame de Lorette and made a dash at the Hache Wood, the western outskirts of which they reached twenty minutes after the attack

began. The capture of the wood has already been described. The French attack on the right, being held up by machine-gun fire, could not be maintained in the cemetery, and it was decided to approach Souchez by the main road so that they might pour in their forces on the east, while, to the north, the French force that had bitten its way into the Hache Wood was to continue its advance. This maneuver decided the day. The Germans, who were in danger of being cut off in Souchez, abandoned their positions, and those who had retaken the cemetery, being in the same perilous circumstances, regained by their communication trenches their second line on the slopes of Hill 119. Thus fell Souchez to the French in two days. The allied offensive was a short and sharp affair, skillfully planned and bravely executed, but disappointing in result. At the great price of 50,000 casualties the British had overthrown the Germans on a front of five miles, and in some places to a depth of 4,000 yards, and had captured many prisoners and guns; but they had not definitely broken the German lines. At a heavy cost the Allies on the western front had captured about 160 German guns and disposed of 150,000 Germans, including some 27,000 prisoners, and the result of their efforts was to shake the Germans in the west very severely and to call back to France many troops from the eastern front. That the blow was regarded by the kaiser as a serious one was shown by an Order of the Day in which he declared that every important success obtained by the Allies on the western front "will be considered as due to the culpable negligence of the German commanders, who will lay themselves open to being punished for incompetence." But if the Allies' successes were due to hard fighting and brilliant dash, the fact that they did not break right through the enemy's lines is an eloquent testimony to the wonderful strength of the German resistance. The marvel was that any were left alive in the first line after the preliminary bombardment to face the bayonets and grenades of the attackers. In a report from German General Headquarters, dated September 29, 1915, Max Osborn, special correspondent of the "Vossische Zeitung," described how the French artillery swept the hinterland of the German posi-

tions in Champagne and then concentrated upon these. "The violence of the fire then reached its zenith. Hitherto it had been a raging, searching fire; now it became a mad drumming, beyond all power of imagination. It is impossible to convey any idea of the savagery of this bombardment. Never has this old planet heard such an uproar. An officer who had witnessed during the summer the horrors of Arras, of Souchez, and of the Lorette Heights, told me that those were not in any way to be compared with the present, beyond all conception, appalling artillery onslaught. Day and night for fifty hours, at some points for seventy hours, the guns vomited destruction and murder against the Germans, the German trenches and against the German batteries. Strongly built trenches were covered in and ground to powder; their edges and platforms were shorn off and converted into dust heaps; men were buried, crushed, and inevitably suffocated—but the survivors stood fast." A German soldier told how, in the fierce hand-to-hand fighting which followed, a Frenchman and a German flew at each other's throat, and how they fell, both pierced by the same bullet, still locked in each other's grip. And so, too, they were buried. Courage is not the monopoly of any race or nation.

CHAPTER VI

THE BATTLE OF LOOS

AT 5.50 a. m. on September 25, 1915, a dense, heavy cloud arose slowly from the earth—a whitish, yellowish, all-enveloping cloud that rolled slowly toward the German trenches—a little too much to the north. Thousands of German bullets whistled through that cloud, but it passed on, unheeding. The attack began at 6.30.

A Scottish division had been ordered to take Loos and Hill 70. It therefore played the first rôle in the battle, since it was on Loos, of which Hill 70 is the gateway, that the efforts of all

converged from the north as well as the south. Brigade "X" of the Scottish division was to execute an enveloping movement to the north around Loos and to carry Hill 70 by storm. Brigade "Y" meanwhile was to attack the Loos front, Brigade "Z" remaining in reserve. By 7.05 a. m. the whole of the first line was captured. The second line, covering Loos, was carried with the same ease. The Germans, taken by surprise, were fleeing toward Loos, where they put up a stern rear-guard fight, and toward Lens, which was strongly fortified.

After the capture of the second line in front of Loos, "X" and "Y" Brigades separated, "Y" surrounding the village with two battalions, while the rest captured the village and cleaned it up. It was stiff street fighting, the Germans being hidden away in all sorts of corners with plenty of machine guns. The Scots made a quick job of it, not stopping for trifles. It is related that a sergeant, to whom two Germans had surrendered, pulled a few pieces of string from his pocket, tied their hands together, and passed them to the rear with the request, "Please forward." Brigade "X" had meanwhile thrown its enveloping net around Loos without meeting much resistance. The British had reached the top of Hill 70 by nine o'clock. The climb was a hard and rough accomplishment, with the right flank under mitrailleuse fire from Loos, and with the left exposed to fire from Pit 14A; but it was accomplished far too quickly. Serious disasters frequently occur in war through tardiness; in this case a possible great victory was missed through being too quick and arriving too early. When the brigadier got up to Loos he saw his men vanishing in the distance. A strong German redoubt, over the other side of the hill crest, was not even defended. The brigade crossed the Lens-La Bassée road, which runs along the height, carried the third German line on the opposite slope, and at 9.20 it was outside St. Auguste. Unfortunately for the British, the corps commander, who arrived at this moment with his staff in hot haste, was unable to get his unit in hand again. Overflowing with offensive ardor, he had thrown his men forward with a most impetuous movement, and they got out of hand. The brigade turned at right angles and got into the suburbs of Lens. It

seemed as though the gates of the northern plain were about to be smashed in. Then the great danger appeared. There was still no great converging movement from the south, where a British division and French troops were engaged. Touch was also lost to the north. The neighboring division in this direction was held up until the afternoon by wire entanglements. The left flank of the brigade was at the mercy of a German counter-attack, but the Germans did not launch it, for they had not the men. What they did, however, was to concentrate on the brigade a murderous fire from Loos in the south, Lens in the east, St. Auguste in the north, and Pit 14A and two or three neighboring houses in the west. They were even seen hastily installing machine guns along the railway embankment northeast of Lens.

Shattered by fire, uncertain of its direction, shaken by the very quickness of its previous advance, the brigade hesitated, sowed the ground with its dead, and retired in good order on Hill 70, where it intrenched slightly below the redoubt abandoned by the Germans during the attack and which was now reoccupied by them. As a matter of fact, the screening gas clouds hindered rather than helped the attack. The Scottish division was exhausted, but if fresh troops had come up and a fresh attack had been delivered against the Germans, who were gathering all their men in the Douai region, the German front would undoubtedly have been pierced like cardboard. Brigade "X" had made a path, and if only reenforcements had arrived without delay the path would have become a highroad—would have become the whole of Douai plain. Not until nightfall were the reserves forthcoming. It is evident that, in this first day, advantage was not taken of the results achieved.

Though long-range fighting was incessantly kept up around Loos, nothing of importance happened till October 8, 1915, when the Germans, after an intense bombardment with shells of all calibers, launched a violent attack on Loos and made desperate efforts to recapture their lost positions. The main efforts were directed against the chalk pit north of Hill 70, and between Hulluch and the Hohenzollern redoubt. In the chalk pit attack, the Germans assembled behind some woods which lay from 300

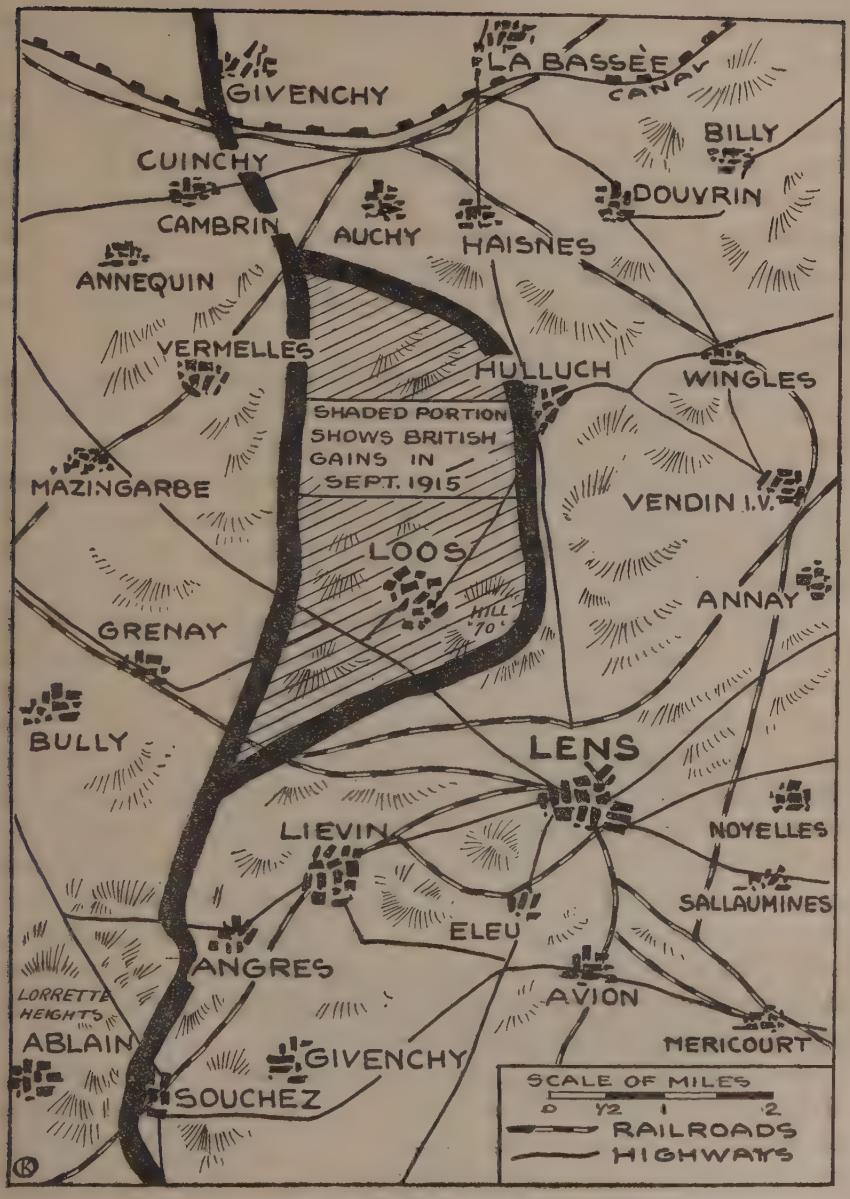
to 500 yards from the British trenches. Between these woods and the British line the attacking force was mown down by combined rifle, machine-gun and artillery fire, not a man getting within forty yards of the trenches.

Farther to the south, between Hulluch and the quarries, the attack was also repelled, the British securing a German trench west of Cité St. Elie. The Germans did succeed in penetrating the British front in the southern communication trench of the Hohenzollern redoubt, but were shortly after expelled again by British bombers.

British flying men played an important part in the Battle of Loos and in the preparations that preceded it. Troops and guns had to be moved at night so that the German aeroplanes might not note the concentration. Hence it was decided that British aeros should warn off the German flyers by day. They probably outnumbered the German machines by eight to one. As the attack proceeded a flock of aeroplanes was cutting circles and dipping and turning over the battle field as if in an exhibition of airmanship. They appeared to be disconnected from the battle, but no participants were more busy or intent than they. All the panorama of action was beneath them; they alone could really "see" the battle if they chose. But each aviator stole only passing glimpses of the whole, for each one was intent on his part, which was to keep watch of whether the shells of the battery to which he reported were on the target or not. To distinguish whose shell-burst was whose in the midst of that cloud of dust and smoke over the German positions seemed as difficult as to separate the spout of steam of one pipe from another when a hundred were making a wall of vapor. Yet so skilled is the well-trained airman that he can tell at a glance. It is not difficult to spot shells when only a few batteries are firing, but when perhaps a hundred guns are dropping shells on a half-mile front of trench, a highly trained eye is required. Occasionally a plane was observed to sweep down like a hawk that had located a fish in the water. At all hazards that intrepid aviator was going to identify the shell-bursts of the batteries which he represented. The enemy might have him in rifle range,

but they were too busy trying to hold up the British infantry to fire at him. Other aeroplanes were dropping shells on railway trains and bridges, to hinder the Germans, once they had learned where the force of the attack was to be exerted, from rushing reenforcements to the spot. For that kind of work, as for all reconnaissances, the aviators like low-lying clouds. They slip down out of these to have a look around and drop a bomb—thus killing two birds with one stone—and then rise to cover before the enemy can bring his antiaircraft guns to bear.

A German description of the Battle of Loos says that during the preliminary gas attack the British artillery was hurling gas bombs upon the Germans. The latter coughed and held their ground as long as they could, but many fell, unable to resist the fumes. In the midst of all this the Germans were preparing for the expected infantry attack. Finally the British appeared, emerging suddenly as if from nowhere, behind a cloud of gas, and wearing masks. They came on in thick lines and storming columns. The first line of the attackers were quickly shot down by the hail of rifle and machine-gun bullets that rained upon them from the shattered German trenches. The dead and wounded soon lay like a wall before the German position. The second and third lines of the British suffered the same fate. It was estimated that the number of British killed before this German division alone amounted to 8,000 to 10,000. The fourth line of attackers, however, finally succeeded in overrunning the decimated front line of Germans, who stood by their guns to the very last; those of them who had not fallen were made prisoners. Not one of them returned to tell what happened in this terrific fighting. The British are stated to have attacked in an old-fashioned, out-of-date manner that made the German staff officers stare in open-mouthed wonder. "Eight ranks of infantry, mounted artillery, cavalry in the background—that was too much! A veritable battle plan of a past age, the product of a mind in its dotage, and half a century behind the times! Splendidly, with admirable courage, the English troops came forward to the attack. They were young, wore no decorations; they carried out with blind courage what their senile commanders ordered—and



THE BATTLE AT LOOS

this in a period of mortars, machine guns and the telephone. Their behavior was splendid, but all the more pitiable was the breakdown of their attack."

Connected with the Battle of Loos there was one little person who deserves a chapter in history—all to herself—and that is Mlle. Emilienne Moreau, a young French girl who lived—and probably still lives—with her parents in the storm-battered village of Loos. She was seventeen years of age at the time she became famous, and was studying to be a school-teacher. She was "mentioned in dispatches" in the French Official Journal in these terms:

"On September 25, 1915, when the British troops entered the village of Loos, she organized a first-aid station in her house and worked day and night to bring in the wounded, to whom she gave all assistance, while refusing to accept any reward. Armed with a revolver she went out and succeeded in overcoming two German soldiers who, hidden in a near-by house, were firing at the first-aid station."

This, however, was not a complete list of the exploits of la petite Moreau. She shot two Germans when their bayonets were very close to her, and later, snatching some hand bombs from a British grenadier's stock, she accounted for three more who were busy at the same occupation. Furthermore, "when the British line was wavering under the most terrible cyclone of shells ever let loose upon earth, Emilienne Moreau sprang forward with a bit of tricolored bunting in her hand and the glorious words of the 'Marseillaise' on her lips, and by her fearless example averted a retreat that might have meant disaster along the whole front. Only the men who were in that fight can fully understand why Sir Douglas Haig was right in christening her the Joan of Arc of Loos."

A more mature French Amazon is Madame Louise Arnaud, the widow of an officer killed in the war. She commanded a corps of French and Belgian women who were permitted by the War Minister to don uniforms. The corps was intended for general service at the front, one-third of them being combatants, all able to ride, shoot and swim.

THE NEW DRIVE

IN THE

CHAMPAGNE AND ARTOIS

LITTLE ORPHANS · TRENCHES AND ARTILLERY IN THE CHAMPAGNE · YPRES · ARGONNE AND THE VOSGES

Copyright, Medem Photo Service

Two little French orphans, fearless because accustomed to the ruins and the shells, are eagerly questioning their hero, a French artilleryman

Zigzag trenches in Champagne. The strip on which the armies are clinched varies in width and winds over dunes, marshes, woods and mountains

Copyright by Courtesy of French Embassy

French guns and gunners on the firing line in the fierce artillery bombardment that preceded an advance of the Allies in Champagne, in September and October of 1915

British wire tappers, who, under the friendly concealment of a huge haystack, are getting German messages and reporting to the headquarters of the Allies

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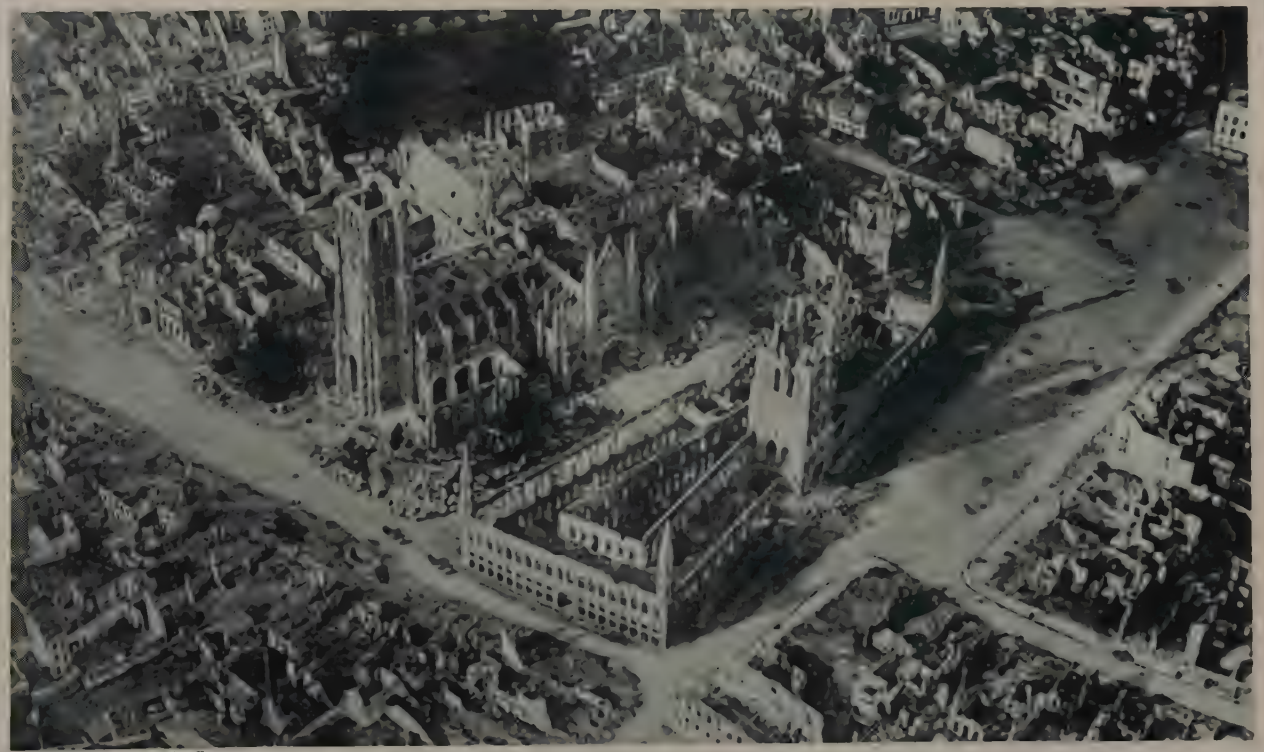
A strange picture of a French band in the Argonne. Poison gas had been repeatedly used by the Germans in attacking on this front, with the result that even the members of the regimental band wore gas masks



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The ruins of Ypres, Belgium, a True City of the Dead. In the center are the famous Cloth Hall and the Cathedral

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Abandoned German trenches in Champagne pulverized under the heavy bombardment from French artillery that preceded the advance of the Allies

Official French Photograph

A French officer in the Vosges enjoying a well-earned rest and a newspaper though the roof of his precarious shelter crashes over his head

After the great allied offensive in the west had spent its force —or rather the force of its initial momentum—quite an interesting battle broke out, this time on paper. It consisted on the one side of an attempt to estimate the results of success and to attach to them the highest possible value. The energy of the other side was devoted to belittling these results and proclaiming the alleged futility of the venture. Thus, King George telegraphed to Sir John French on September 30, 1915:

"I heartily congratulate you and all ranks of my army under your command upon the success which has attended their gallant efforts since the commencement of the combined attack."

Lord Kitchener sent this message:

"My warmest congratulations to you and all serving under you on the substantial success you have achieved. . . ."

In his report of October 3, 1915, General French stated that "The enemy has suffered heavy losses, particularly in the many counterattacks by which he has vainly endeavored to wrest back the captured positions, but which have all been gallantly repulsed by our troops. . . . I feel the utmost confidence and assurance that the same glorious spirit which has been so marked a feature throughout the first phase of this great battle will continue until our efforts are crowned by final and complete victory."

The following sentence is culled from the French official report on the fighting in Champagne:

". . . Germans surrendered in groups, even though not surrounded, so tired were they of the fight, and so depressed by hunger and convinced of our determination to continue our effort to the end. . . ."

Rather contradictory in tone and substance were the German dispatches:

"The German General Staff recently invited a number of newspaper men from neutral countries—the United States, South America, Holland, and Rumania—to inspect the fighting line in the west during time of battle. . . . They are thus enabled to verify the reports from the German headquarters concerning this greatest and most fearful battle fought on the western front since the beginning of the war. They are, accordingly, in a

position to state that exaggerated statements are made in the reports from French headquarters, and to confirm the facts that the Germans were outnumbered several times by the French; that the French suffered terrific and unheard-of losses, in spite of several days of artillery preparation; that the French attacks failed altogether, as none of them attained the expected result, and that the encircling movement of General Joffre is without tangible result." "The world presently shall see the pompously advertised grand offensive broken by the iron will of our people in arms. . . . They are welcome to try it again if they like." "French and English storming columns in unbroken succession roll up against the iron wall constituted by our heroic troops. As all hostile attacks have hitherto been repulsed with gigantic losses, particularly for the English, the whole result of the enemy's attack, lasting for days, is merely a denting in of our front in two places. . . ." Who shall decide when doctors disagree?

CHAPTER VII

THE CAVELL CASE—ACCIDENT TO KING GEORGE

ON October 15, 1915, the United States Ambassador in London informed the British Foreign Office that Miss Edith Cavell, lately the head of a large training school for nurses in Brussels, had been executed by the German military authorities of that city after sentence of death had been passed on her. It was understood that the charge against Miss Cavell was that she had harbored fugitive British and French soldiers and Belgians of military age, and had assisted them to escape from Belgium in order to join the colors. Miss Cavell was the daughter of a Church of England clergyman, and was trained as a nurse at the London Hospital. On the opening of the Ecole Belge d'Infirmières Diplomées, Brussels, in 1907, she was appointed matron of the school. She went there with a view to introduce into

Belgium British methods of nursing and of training nurses. Those who knew Miss Cavell were impressed by her strength of character and unflinching devotion. She could have returned to England in September, 1914, shortly after the outbreak of the war, when seventy English nurses were able to leave Belgium through the influence of the United States Minister, but she chose to remain at her post. The "execution," which was accompanied by several unpleasant features, raised a great outcry of public indignation not only throughout the British Empire, but also in most neutral countries. That indignation rose to a still higher pitch when, on October 22, 1915, the report on the case, by Mr. Brand Whitlock, United States Minister in Belgium, was published in the press. From the report it appeared, what the world had hitherto been ignorant of, that Mr. Whitlock had made the most strenuous efforts to save the unfortunate lady from death. His humanitarian labors in that direction were strongly seconded by the Spanish Minister in Brussels.

Miss Cavell's mother, a widow, residing at Norwich, received the following letter of sympathy from the king and queen:

"Buckingham Palace,
"October 23, 1915.

"Dear Madam:

"By command of the King and Queen I write to assure you that the hearts of their Majesties go out to you in your bitter sorrow, and to express their horror at the appalling deed which has robbed you of your child. Men and women throughout the civilized world, while sympathizing with you, are moved with admiration and awe at her faith and courage in death.

"Believe me, dear Madam,

"Yours very truly,
"STAMFORDHAM."

The report described how Mr. Hugh S. Gibson, the Secretary of the American Legation, sought out the German Governor, Baron von der Lancken, late at night before the execution, and, with the Spanish Minister pleaded with him and the other German officers for the Englishwoman's life. There was a reference

to an apparent lack of good faith on the part of the German authorities in failing to keep their promise to inform the American Minister fully of the trial and sentence. Mr. Whitlock's final appeal was a note sent to Von Lancken late on the night of October 11, 1915, which read as follows:

"My dear Baron: I am too sick to present my request myself, but I appeal to your generosity of heart to support it and save from death this unhappy woman. Have pity on her.

"Yours truly,

"BRAND WHITLOCK."

The next day Mr. Whitlock telegraphed to our Ambassador in London: "Miss Cavell sentenced yesterday and executed at 2 o'clock this morning, despite our best efforts, continued until the last moment." The sentence had been confirmed and the execution ordered to be carried out by General von Bissing, the German Governor General of Belgium.

The British press drew an apposite parallel between the summary execution of Miss Cavell in Belgium and the course taken in England in the case of Mrs. Louise Herbert, a German, and the wife of an English curate in Darlington. She had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment as a spy. According to English criminal law every condemned person is entitled to appeal against the sentence inflicted. Mrs. Herbert availed herself of this indisputable right, and her appeal was heard at Durham on October 20, 1915—eight days after the execution of Miss Cavell. The female spy admitted that she had sought information regarding munitions and intended to send this information to Germany. She also admitted that she had corresponded with Germany through friends in Switzerland. Here, according to military law, was a certain case for the death sentence, which would undoubtedly have been carried out in the Tower had the accused been a man. It must be borne in mind that the Court of Appeals in England has the power to increase a sentence as well as to reduce or quash it altogether. Astonished by her frank answers, the judge remarked: "This woman has a conscience—she wishes to answer truthfully and deserves credit for that. At

the same time, she is dangerous." He then gave judgment that the sentence of six months' imprisonment should stand. No charge of espionage was preferred against Miss Cavell. She was refused the advocate Mr. Whitlock offered to provide her with, and the details of the secret trial have not been made public.

Whatever may be the right or the wrong of the case, it is reasonably safe to apply to it the famous dictum of Fouché on Napoleon's execution of the Duc d'Enghien: "It is worse than a crime; it is a blunder." It certainly had the effect of still further embittering the enemies of Germany. Perhaps no incident of the great world war will be more indelibly imprinted on the British mind than this. Many thousands of young Englishmen who had hitherto held back rushed to join the colors. "Edith Cavell Recruiting Meetings" were held all over the United Kingdom. A great national memorial service was held in St. Paul's Cathedral in London, where representatives of the king and queen, statesmen, the nobility and thousands of officers and soldiers attended. The Dowager Queen Alexandra, who is the patron of the great institution now in course of erection and known as the "Queen Alexandra Nurses' Training School," expressed the desire that her name should give place to that of Miss Cavell, and that the institution shall be called "The Edith Cavell Nurses' Training School."

Within a month of her death it had been decided to erect a statue to the memory of Miss Cavell in Trafalgar Square. Sir George Frampton, R.A., President of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, undertook to execute the statue without charge.

The most permanent memorial of the death of Nurse Cavell will be a snow-clad peak in the Rocky Mountains, which the Canadian Government has decided to name "Mount Cavell." It is situated fifteen miles south of Jasper, on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, near the border of Alberta, at the junction of the Whirlpool and Athabasca Rivers, and has a height of more than 11,000 feet.

A curious sequel followed the execution of Miss Cavell. Nearly three months later, on January 6, 1916, a young Belgian was found shot dead in Schaerbeek, a suburb of Brussels. The Ger-

man authorities took the matter in hand for investigation, but in the meantime General von Bissing fined the city of Brussels 500,000 marks and the suburb of Schaerbeek 50,000 marks on the plea that the murder had been committed with a revolver, the Germans having ordered that all arms should be surrendered at the town hall. But there was more in this affair than an ordinary crime. The "Echo Belge," published in Amsterdam since the German occupation of Belgium, revealed that the punitive action by the German authorities was prompted by something other than an infringement of the regulations. The body found was that of a certain Niels de Rode, and he it was who denounced Miss Cavell and also betrayed several Belgians—his own countrymen—who were trying to cross the frontier to join the army. The "Echo Belge" asserted that De Rode was executed by Belgian patriots to avenge the betrayal of Miss Cavell. The anger of the German authorities was explained by the loss of their informer.

On October 22, 1915, London was officially informed that "The king is in France, where he has gone to visit his army. His majesty also hopes to see some of the allied troops." This was not the king's first visit to the battle line, and, as before, his departure from England and arrival on the Continent had been kept a secret until he had reached his destination. The king traveled by automobile from Havre to various parts of the British and French lines, "somewhere in France," inspecting troops and visiting hospitals. The royal tour was brought to a premature close on the morning of the 28th owing to an unfortunate accident. The king had just finished the second of two reviews of troops representing corps of the First Army when his horse, frightened by the cheers of the men, reared and fell, and his majesty was severely bruised. Twice the horse (a mare) reared up when the soldiers burst suddenly into cheers at only a few yards' distance. The first time the mare came down again on her forefeet, but the second time she fell over and, in falling, rolled slightly on to the king's leg. The announcement of the king's mishap came with dramatic suddenness to the assembled officers and troops. The troops of the corps which he had first

inspected could hear from where they stood the cheers of their comrades about a mile away, which told them that the second review was over, and that the king would pass down the road fronting them in a few minutes. The orders to raise their caps and cheer were shouted to the men by the company officers, and then the whole corps, with bayoneted rifles at the slope, advanced in brigade order across the huge fallow field in which they had been drawn up to within thirty yards or so of the road. In a few minutes a covered green automobile was seen tearing down the road at full speed, and as it drew up opposite the center of the corps the cheering began to spread all along the line. In the enthusiasm of the moment the majority did not notice that the car was not flying the royal standard, and even when an officer, with the pink and white brassard of an Army Corps Staff, jumped out of the car and began to shout hasty instructions few realized their mistake and his words were carried away down the tempestuous wind that raged at the time. Then the officer hurried here and there calling out that the king had met with an accident and that there was to be no cheering. A few of those in the center caught his words, but the news had not spread to more than a fraction of the whole body before the king's car drove past. A curious spectacle now presented itself. Along one portion of the front the men stood silently at attention, while their comrades on either side of them, and yet other troops farther away down the road, were raising their caps on their bayonets and cheering with true British lustiness. Some could catch a glimpse of the king as his car dashed swiftly by. He was sitting half-bent in the corner of the vehicle, and his face wore a faint smile of acknowledgment. The king's injuries proved to be worse than was at first supposed, necessitating his removal to London on a stretcher.

CHAPTER VIII

OPERATIONS IN CHAMPAGNE AND ARTOIS—PREPARATIONS FOR WINTER CAMPAIGN

BY the middle of October operations on the western front centralized almost entirely in the Champagne and Artois districts, where the Germans, fully appreciating the menace to their lines created by the results of the allied offensive, sought by continuous violent counterattacks to recover the territory from which they had been dislodged and to prevent the Allies from consolidating and strengthening their gains. Their attacks in the Artois fell chiefly between Hulluch and Hill 70, and southeast of Givenchy, against the heights of Petit Vimy. The Germans succeeded in retaking small sections of first-line trenches, but lost some of their new trenches in return. Whereas the Allies held practically all they had gained, the Germans were considerably the losers by the transaction. The British attempted to continue their offensive by driving between Loos and Hulluch, the most important and at the same time the most dangerous section on the British front. By steadily forging ahead southeast of Loos toward Hill 70, the British were driving a wedge into the German line and creating a perilous salient around the town of Angres as the center. To obviate the danger from counterattacks against the sides of the salient, the British endeavored to flatten out the point of the wedge by capturing more ground north of Hill 70 toward Hulluch. To some extent the plan succeeded; they advanced east of the Lens-La Bassée road for about 500 yards, an apparently insignificant profit, but it had the effect of strengthening the British position.

Uninterrupted fighting in Champagne had made little difference to either side, save that the French had managed to straighten out their line somewhat, though they were by no means nearer to their desired goal — the Challerange-Bazancourt railway. If that could be taken, the Germans facing them would be cut off from the crown prince's army operating in the

Argonne. Bulgaria had meanwhile entered the conflict and started the finishing campaign of Serbia with the assistance of her Teutonic allies.

Between October 19 and October 24, 1915, the Germans made eight distinct attacks in the Souchez sector in Artois, attempting to loosen the French grip on Hill 140. In this venture the First Bavarian Army Corps was practically wiped out by terrible losses. Each attack was reported to have been repulsed. Commenting on the same event, the German report said that ". . . enemy advances were repulsed. Detachments which penetrated our positions were immediately driven back." Both sides of the battle line now settled down to the same round of seesaw battles of the preceding midsummer; attacks and counterattacks; trenches captured and recaptured; here a hundred yards won, there a hundred yards lost. After almost every one of these events the three headquarters issued statements to the effect that "the enemy was repelled with heavy losses," or that some place or other had been "recaptured by our troops." On October 24, 1915, the French in Champagne made some important progress. In front of their (the French) position the Germans occupied a very strongly organized salient which had resisted all previous attacks. In its southwestern part, on the northern slopes of Hill 196, at a point one and a quarter miles to the north of Mesnil-les-Hurlus, this salient included a valuable strategic position called La Courtine (The Curtain), which the French took after some severe fighting. La Courtine extended for a distance of 1,200 yards with an average depth of 250 yards, and embracing three or four lines of trenches connected up with underground tunnels and the customary communication trenches, all of which had been thoroughly prepared for defense. In spite of the excellence of these works and the ferocious resistance of the German soldiers, the French succeeded in taking this position by storm after preparatory artillery fire. On the same day that this was announced, the Berlin report put it thus: "In Champagne the French attacked near Tahure and against our salient north of Le Mesnil, after a strong preparation with their artillery. Near Tahure their attack was not carried out

to its completion, having been stopped by our fire. Late in the afternoon stubborn fighting was in progress on the salient north of Le Mesnil. North and east of this salient an attack was repulsed with severe French losses."

The following two interesting reports were issued on October 27, 1915:

Paris

After having exploded in the neighborhood of the road from Arras to Lille . . . a series of powerful mines which destroyed the German intrenchments . . . our troops immediately occupied the excavations. They installed themselves there, notwithstanding a very violent bombardment and several counterattacks by the enemy, who suffered serious losses. We captured about 30 prisoners.

Berlin

After the explosion of a French mine on the Lille-Arras road an unimportant engagement developed, which went in our favor.

An important event happened in France on October 28, 1915, when the Viviani Cabinet resigned, much to the general surprise of the nation. The result of the change of government was that M. Aristide Briand, one of the aggressive and militant members of the Socialist party, succeeded as Premier and Foreign Secretary, M. de Freycinet became Vice President of the Council, and General Gallieni Minister for War. It was not a "political crisis," but a union of the parties—a coalition, such as the British Government had already adopted. The change implied a distribution of responsibility among the leading men of all parties, a useful measure to stifle criticism and insure unanimity of purpose. M. Viviani reentered the new Cabinet as Minister of Justice. For the first time in the history of the French Republic a coalition ministry of all the opposing factions was formed.

Some stir and much speculation was caused when General Joffre visited London at the end of October and held another conference with Lord Kitchener. It was generally understood that some scheme for central military control was being promoted, to render quicker decisions and coordinate action possible. It was obvious that matters of vital interest had brought the French Generalissimo to London. Shortly before his departure it leaked out that the British Government had for some time contemplated the creation of a new General Staff composed of experts to supervise the prosecution of the war, and it was believed, perhaps with justification, that General Joffre had come to give his opinion on the matter. On November 17, 1915, the first meeting of the Anglo-French War Council was held in Paris. The British members in attendance were the Prime Minister, Mr. Arthur James Balfour, First Lord of the Admiralty; Mr. David Lloyd-George, Minister of Munitions, and Sir Edward Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The French participants were Premier Briand, General Gallieni, Admiral Lacaze, Minister of Marine, and General Joffre.

At the beginning of November a temporary lull had set in on parts of the western front, and the center of interest was for the time shifted to the Balkans. The French and British seemed unable to continue their offensive operations and were, for the most part, confined to their trenches and such territory as they had wrested from the Germans during September and early October. On October 30, 1915, the Germans had again begun a series of determined offensives in Artois and Champagne. They met with considerable success in the initial stages, for on the morning of the 31st they had gained about 1,200 yards of the French trenches near Neuville-St. Vaast and on the summit of the Butte de Tahure, capturing 1,500 French soldiers. The struggle for the Neuville trenches continued for days, during which the positions changed hands at short intervals.

In Champagne the Germans, after a fresh artillery preparation, with the employment of suffocating shells of large caliber, renewed their attacks in the region to the north of Le Mesnil. They delivered four successive assaults in the course of the day

—the first at 6 a. m. on the extreme east of La Courtine; the second at noon against Tahure; the third at 2 p. m. to the south of the village, and the fourth at 4 p. m. against the ridges to the northeast. The French artillery, however, checked their progress and compelled them to retire to their trenches, leaving 356 unwounded prisoners with the French. Beyond occasional artillery duels in the Dixmude-Ypres district, nothing of importance happened on the Belgian front.

In the middle of November hard fighting was resumed on the Artois front in the region of the Labyrinth, north of Arras, and continued day and night, conducted chiefly with hand grenades. Artillery actions raged in the Argonne forest, near Soissons, Berry-au-Bac, and on the Belgian front. German activity in the Arras-Armentières sector was regarded as prognosticating a big attack. While the Germans collected men and munitions at one spot, the French and British, adopting worrying tactics, suddenly descended and harassed them in another. A successful little enterprise was carried out by a small party of British troops during the night of November 16-17, 1915, with a loss of one man killed and one wounded, just north of the river Douave, southwest of Messines. They forced an entrance into the German front trench after bayoneting thirty of the occupants. The party returned with twelve German prisoners. About November 19-20, 1915, the heavy artillery of the Allies battered the German trenches west of Ypres, while their warships were shelling the coast fortifications at Westende.

Between November 20 and 25, 1915, the British employed their time in bombarding the German positions in several places, destroying wire entanglements and parapets. The Germans made but little reply, contenting themselves with holding tight to their trenches. They were more active north of Loos, Ploegstreet, and east of Ypres. On the evening of the 22d the Germans made a heavy bombing attack on a mine crater held by the British south of the Bethune-La Bassée road, with apparently inconclusive results. Constant mining operations were resorted to by both sides, the British exploding one and occupying the crater on the aforesaid road, and the Germans perform-

ing a similar feat south of Cuinchy, severely damaging some British trenches. They also exploded mines near Carnoy and Givenchy. A British aeroplane squadron of twenty-three machines bombarded a German hut encampment at Achiet le Grand, northeast of Albert. A single German aero ascended to engage the attackers and deposited sundry bombs in the neighborhood of Bray. In the Argonne forest artillery activity was more pronounced, and a German ammunition depot in the Fille Morte region was destroyed.

A big fall of snow somewhat restricted operations in the Vosges, especially in the region of the Fecht and Thur Rivers. On the Belgian line a rather violent bombardment occurred in front of St. Heewege. To the north of Dixmude and the east of St. Jacques Capelle a retaliatory fire was kept up for two days. The subjugated Belgians raised a voice of protest against the German method of raising the war levies imposed upon the country. They complained that, whereas Belgium had faithfully carried out her share of the arrangement, the German Government was indebted to the Belgians a matter of $12,000,000 for supplies that had not been paid for. Nearly $100,000,000 had been exacted in tribute by Germany from the occupied provinces of Belgium up to November 10, 1915, since which date the German Governor General had issued orders for a monthly war tax of 40,000,000 francs ($8,000,000) until further notice. Calculating that the Belgians in the occupied territory numbered 6,000,000, this fresh levy meant that every man, woman, and child would have to pay about $1.35 into the German war treasury every month. This new levy order issued by Baron von Bissing differed in some important particulars from the one issued a year previously. No limit was referred to upon the expiration of which the tax should cease; in the former order the period of a year was mentioned. Another new clause was to the effect that the German Administration should have the right to demand the payment in German money at the customary rate in Brussels of 80 marks to 100 francs. This device probably aimed at raising the rate of the mark abroad. That nine Belgian provinces had hitherto been

able regularly to pay these large monthly installments was due to the fact that the provincial authorities secured large support from the Société Générale de Belgique, which bank expressed its readiness, on certain conditions, to lend money to the provinces and make payments for them, these transactions, of course, taking place under the supervision of the German authorities. On the other hand, the Société Générale was granted by the Germans the exclusive right to issue bank notes, which had hitherto been the privilege of the Belgian National Bank.

The uninterrupted and intense activity along the front with grenades, mines and heavy guns can be only vaguely described or even understood from the brief chronicles of the official bulletins. This underground warfare, to which only dry references are occasionally made, was carried on steadily by day and by night. The mines, exploding at irregular intervals along the lines, gave place to singular incidents which rarely reached the public. Near Arras, in Artois, where sappers largely displaced infantry, was related the story of two French sappers, Mauduit and Cadoret, who were both decorated with the Military Medal. The story of how they won this distinction is worth repeating:

They had dug their way under and beyond German trenches when the explosion of a German mine between the lines cut their gallery, leaving them imprisoned in a space eight feet long. This happened at ten in the morning. They determined to dig toward the surface and encouraged each other by singing Breton songs in low tones while they worked. The air became foul and they were almost suffocated. Their candles went out and left them to burrow in absolute darkness. After hours of intense labor the appearance of a glowworm told them that they were near the surface. Then a fissure of the earth opened and admitted a welcome draft of fresh air. The miners pushed out into the clear starlight. Within arm's length they beheld the loophole of a German trench and could hear German voices. The thought seems not to have occurred to them to give themselves up, as they could easily have done. Instead, they drew back and began to dig in another direction, enduring still longer the distress which they had already undergone so long without food or

drink. After digging another day they came out in the crater of a mine. The night was again clear and it was impossible for them to show themselves without being shot by one side or the other. So they decided to hold out for another night. They lay inside the crater exposed to shells, bombs, and grenades from both sides, eating roots and drinking rain water. On the third night Mauduit crept near the edge of the crater and got near an advance sentinel, one of those pushed out at night beyond the lines to protect against surprise. Cadoret, exhausted, lost his balance and fell back into the crater. Under the German fire Mauduit went back and helped his companion out. Both crawled along the ground until they fell into the French trenches.

Attacks by French aeroplanes upon the German lines were the main features of the day's fighting for November 28, 1915. They damaged the aviation hangars near Mülhausen, in Alsace, and brought down two German machines. The Germans exploded a mine in front of the French works near the Labyrinth, north of Arras, and succeeded in occupying the crater.

Near the end of November the sleet, snow and winds abated and a dry frost accompanied by clear skies set in. Immediately a perfect epidemic of aerial activity broke out. French, German, British, and Belgian aeroplanes scoured the heavens in all directions, seeking information and adventure. Even the restless artillery seemed inspired with still greater energy. German ordnance belched its thunder around Aveling, Loos, Neuve Chapelle, Armentières, and Ypres, eliciting vigorous responses from the opposite sides. Aviators fought in the air and brought each other crashing to earth in mutilated heaps of flesh, framework and blazing machinery. No fewer than fifteen of these engagements were recorded in one day. And yet, despite all the bustle and excitement, the usually conflicting reports agreed that there was nothing particular to report. Each sector appeared to be conducting a local campaign on its own account.

The Switzerland correspondent of the since defunct London "Standard" quoted, on November 30, 1915, from a remarkable article by Dr. Heinz Pothoff, a former member of the Reichstag:

"Can any one doubt that the German General Staff will hesi-

tate to employ extreme measures if Germany is ever on the verge of real starvation? If necessary, we must expel all the inhabitants from the territories which our armies have occupied, and drive them into the enemy's lines; if necessary, we must kill the hundreds of thousands of prisoners who are now consuming our supplies. That would be frightful, but would be inevitable if there were no other way of holding out."

On the last day of November a bill was introduced in the French Chamber of Deputies by General Gallieni calling to the colors for training the 400,000 youths of the class of 1917, who in the ordinary course of events would not have been called out for another two years. The war minister explained that it was not the intention of the Government to send the new class, composed of boys of 18 and 19, to the front at once, but to provide for their instruction and training during the winter for active service in the spring, when, "in concert with our allies, our reenforcements and our armaments will permit us to make the decisive effort." The bill was passed.

A British squadron bombarded the German fortifications on the Belgian coast, from Zeebrugge to Ostend, for two hours on November 30, 1915. The weather suddenly changed on the entire western front. Rain, mist, and thaw imposed a check on the operations, which simmered down to artillery bombardments at isolated points. For the next three months the combatants settled down to the exciting monotony of a winter campaign, making themselves as comfortable as possible, strengthening their positions, keeping a sharp eye on the enemy opposite, and generally preparing for the spring drive. Great offensive and concerted movements can only be carried out after long and deliberate preparations. The Allies had shot their bolt, with only partial success, and considerable time would have to elapse before another advance on a big scale could be undertaken. Hence the winter campaign developed into a series of desultory skirmishes and battles, as either side found an opportunity to inflict some local damage on the other. For the Allies it was part of the "war of attrition," or General Joffre's "nibbling process."

The Germans had gone through a bitter experience in Champagne; with characteristic skill and energy they set to work improving their defenses. At intervals of approximately 500 yards behind their second line they constructed underground strongholds known as "starfish defenses," which cannot be detected from the surface: About thirty feet below the ground is a dugout of generous dimensions, in which are stored machine guns, rifles, and other weapons. Leading from this underground chamber to the surface are five or six tunnels, jutting out in different directions, so that their outlets form half a dozen points in a circle with a diameter of perhaps 100 yards. In each of the tunnels was laid a narrow-gauge railway to allow the machine guns to be speedily brought to the surface. At the mouth of the tunnels were two gun platforms on either side, and the mouth itself was concealed by being covered over with earth or grass. The defenses were also mined, and the mines could be exploded from any one of the various outlets. On several occasions when the French endeavored to press home their advantage they found themselves enfiladed by machine guns raised to the surface by troops who had taken up their places in the underground strongholds at the first menace to the second line. When one of the outlets was captured, machine guns would appear at another; while, if the French troops attempted to rush the stronghold, the Germans took refuge in the other passages, and met them as they appeared.

On the French and British side also, underground defense works were of a most scientific and elaborate character. Trench warfare has become an art. Away from the seat of war the importance of the loss or the gain of a trench is measured by yards. If you are in trenches on the plain, where the water is a few feet below the surface, and all the area has been used as a cockpit, you would wonder how any trench can be held. If, on the other hand, you were snugly installed in a deep trench on a chalk slope, you would wonder how any trench can be lost. Any real picture of what a trench is like cannot be drawn or imagined by a sensitive people. It is, of course, a graveyard—of Germans and British and French. Miners and other workers in the soil

drive their tunnel or trench into inconceivable strata. They come upon populous German dugouts, corked by some explosion perhaps a year ago. They are stopped far below ground by a layer of barbed wire, proved by its superior thickness to be German. Every yard they penetrate is what gardeners call "moved soil." It is of the nature of a fresh mole heap or ants' nest, so crumbled and worked that all its original consistency has been undone. A good deal of it doubtless has been tossed fifty feet in the air on the geyser of a mine or shell explosion. It is full of little bits of burnt sacking, the débris of sandbags. Weapons and bits of weapons and pieces of human bodies are scattered through it like plums. The so-called trench may be no more than a yoked line of shell holes converted with dainty toil and loss to a more perpendicular angle. And the tangled pattern of craters is itself pocked with the smaller dents of bombs. There are three grades of holes—great mine craters that look like an earth convulsion themselves, pitted with shell holes, which in turn are dimpled by bombs. Imagine a place like the Ypres salient, a graveyard maze under the visitation of 8,000 shells falling from three widely separate angles, and some slight idea may be formed of nearly two years' life in the trenches. It is an endless struggle for some geographical feature: a hill, a mound, a river, or for a barn or a house. At Ypres, indeed, the German and British lines have passed through different sides of the same stable at the same time. The competition for a hill or bluff is such that in many cases, as at Hill 60, the desired spot, as well as the intervening houses and even woods, have been wiped out of existence before the rival forces.

On November 2, 1915, the British Premier announced in the House of Commons that there were then nearly a million British soldiers in Belgium and France; that Canada had sent 96,000 men to the front, and that the Germans had not gained any ground in the west since April of that year. He furthermore stated that the British Government was resolved to "stick at nothing" in carrying out its determination to carry the war to a successful conclusion. In addition to the troops mentioned above, the Australian Commonwealth had contributed 92,000

men to date; New Zealand 25,000; South Africa, after a brilliant campaign in which the Germans in Southwest Africa were subdued, had sent 6,500; and Newfoundland, Great Britain's oldest colony, 1,600. Contingents were also sent from Ceylon, the Fiji Islands, and other outlying parts of the empire. The premier said that since the beginning of the war the admiralty had transported 2,500,000 troops, 300,000 sick and wounded, 2,500,000 tons of stores and munitions, and 800,000 horses. The loss of life in the transportation of these troops was stated to be less than one-tenth of one per cent.

On December 2, 1915, General Joffre was appointed commander in chief of all the French armies, excepting those in North Africa, including Morocco, and dependent ministry colonies. The appointment was made on the recommendation of General Gallieni, the War Minister, who, in a report to President Poincaré, said:

"By the decree of October 28, 1913, the Government, charged with the vital interests of the country, alone has the right to decide on the military policy. If the struggle extend to several frontiers, it alone must decide which is the principal adversary against whom the majority of the forces shall be directed. It consequently alone controls the means of action and resources of all kinds, and puts them at the disposal of the general commander in chief of the different theatres of operations.

"The experience gained, however, from the present operations, which are distributed over several fronts, proves that unity of direction, indispensable to the conduct of the war, can only be assured by the presence at the head of all of our armies of a single chief, responsible for the military operations proper."

General Joffre's new appointment possesses a historic interest, for it created him the first real general in chief since the days of Napoleon, independent entirely of the national ruler as well as of the minister for war and any war council.

In the beginning of December, 1915, Field Marshal Sir John French was relieved at his own instance and appointed to the command of the home forces. He was given a viscountcy in recognition of his long and brilliant service in the army.

From the landing of the British Expeditionary Force in France, Sir John French had commanded it on the Franco-Belgian frontier along a front that grew from thirty-two miles to nearly seventy in one year, while the troops under his command had grown in numbers from less than sixty thousand to well over a million. The son of a naval officer, John Denton French began his career as a midshipman in the navy, but gave that up after a three years' trial and joined the army in 1874. General French was essentially a cavalry commander, and as such he distinguished himself in the South African War of 1899-1902. His conduct in the European War has been the subject of some criticism. The time is not yet ripe to form a just estimate of his achievements and failures. Nothing succeeds like success, and nothing is easier than to criticize a military commander who fails to realize the high expectations of his countrymen. Whatever may be the verdict of history for or against General French, it will certainly acknowledge that he did great things with his "contemptible little army." The figure of Viscount French of Ypres will stand out in bold relief when the inner history of Mons, the Marne, Neuve Chapelle, Ypres, and Loos is definitively written. The present generation may not be permitted to read it, for even to-day, after a hundred years, military experts are still divided over the mistakes of the great Napoleon.

The command in chief of the British army now devolved upon General Sir Douglas Haig, who, though a "born aristocrat," had nevertheless taken his trade of soldiering very seriously. He had served with distinction in India and South Africa. During the retreat from Mons General Haig performed marvels of leadership. By skillful maneuvering he extricated his men at Le Cateau in the most critical moment of the retreat. He led in the attack on the Aisne, and is also credited with chief responsibility for the clever movement of the British army from the Aisne to Ypres. In his dispatch on the battle of Ypres Field Marshal French highly praised the valuable assistance he had derived from General Haig. It was said that during the fierce battle of Ypres, "at one time or another every corps and division

commander in the lot lost hope—except Haig. He was a rock all through."

On December 2, 1915, Mr. Asquith announced in the House of Commons that Great Britain's total losses in killed, wounded, and missing since the war began amounted to 510,230.

The figures for the western front were: Killed, 4,620 officers and 69,272 men; wounded, 9,754 officers and 240,283 men; missing, 1,584 officers and 54,446 men; grand total of casualties, 379,959.

CHAPTER IX

EVENTS IN THE WINTER CAMPAIGN

IT is well-nigh impossible to give a connected story of the innumerable and far-flung operations of the winter campaign. It resolves itself into a mere list of dates and a brief description of what happened on those dates. At this short distance of time even the descriptive details are by no means altogether reliable, owing to the contradictory reports that announced them. During the first week in December, 1915, the Germans concentrated strong reenforcements and an immense amount of artillery with the object of striking a blow at the allied line in Flanders and Artois. In Champagne they captured about 800 feet of an advanced trench near Auberive. The French admitted the loss, but claimed that they had reoccupied a large part of the ground originally yielded.

Floods in the Yser region compelled the Germans to abandon many of their advanced trenches, and two of their ammunition depots were blown up. Near Berry-au-Bac they destroyed a French trench with its occupants and blew up some mines that the French had almost completed. Artillery engagements in Artois became more pronounced, especially around Givenchy. On the 8th sixteen British aeroplanes bombed a German stores depot at Miraumont, in the Somme district, and the aerodrome at Hervilly. The attack was carried out in a

high westerly wind, which made flying difficult. All machines returned safely after inflicting much damage on both objectives. A British cargo boat having run aground off the Belgian coast, three German hydroaeroplanes attempted to sink her with bombs. Several of the allied aeroplanes, one of them French, set out from the land and drove the German flyers away after an exciting fight. Deep snow in the Vosges Mountains prevented operations beyond artillery action.

On December 16, 1915, in the course of his demand in the Chamber of Deputies that the Chamber grant three months' credit on the budget account, the French Minister of Finance, M. Ribot, said that while the war expenditure at the beginning of the conflict was 1,500,000,000 francs ($300,000,000) a month, it had risen to 2,100,000,000 francs ($420,000,000). "At the beginning of hostilities financial considerations took a secondary place. We did not think the war would last seventeen months, and now no one can foresee when it will end."

Artillery activity of more than usual intensity at a number of points marked the 17th, 18th and 19th of December, 1915. To the east of Ypres French and British batteries bombarded the German trenches from which suffocating gas was directed toward the British line. No infantry attacks followed. By December 22, 1915, the French had gained the summit of Hartmannsweilerkopf, a dominating peak in southern Alsace, overlooking the roads leading to the Rhine. For eight months they had fought for the position, and thousands of lives were sacrificed by the attackers and the defenders. The Germans succeeded in recovering part of the ground next day. The French took 1,300 prisoners in the capture, and the Germans claimed 1,553 prisoners in the recapture. Fighting continued around the spot for months.

Christmas passed with no break in the hostilities and no material change in the situation on the western front. The year 1915 closed, in a military sense, less favorably for the Allies than it began. Only a few square miles had been reconquered in the west at a heavy sacrifice; Italy had made little progress; the Dardanelles expedition had proved a failure; the British had not

reached Bagdad nor attained their aim in Greece; while Russia had lost nearly all Galicia, with Poland and Courland as well, and the Serbian army had been practically eliminated. On the other hand, the Allies had maintained supremacy on the seas, had captured all but one of the German colonies, and still held all German sea-borne trade in a vise of steel. Not one of the armies of the Allies other than that of Serbia had been struck down; each of them was hard at work raising new armies and developing the supply of munitions. The spirit of all the warring peoples, without exception, appeared to be that of a grim, unbending determination. Germany, with a large proportion of her able-bodied manhood disposed of and her trade with the outer world cut off, was perhaps in greater straits than a superficial examination of her military successes showed. The care with which the Germans economized their supplies of men, and made the fullest possible use in the field of men who were not physically fit for actual military service, was illustrated by the creation of some new formations called Armierungsbattalionen. These battalions, of which, it was said, no full description would be published before the end of the war, consisted of all sorts of men with slight physical defects, underofficers and noncommissioned officers who were either too old for service or had been invalided. Their duty was to relieve the soldiers of as much work as possible. They were employed in roadmaking and in transporting munitions and supplies in difficult country—for example, in the Vosges Mountains. Most of these men—and there were many thousands of them—wore uniforms, but carried no arms.

It is rather an ironical commentary on "our present advanced state of culture," as Carlyle put it, that the birthday of the Man of Sorrows—the period of "peace on earth and good will toward all men"—was celebrated even amid the raucous crash and murderous turmoil of the battle field. Preparations had long been in the making for the event. In the homes of France, Germany, and Great Britain millions and millions of parcels were carefully packed full of little luxuries, comforts, tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes, and addressed to some loved one "at the front."

Newspapers collected subscriptions and busy societies were also formed for the same purpose, so that there was hardly a single combatant who did not receive some token of remembrance from home.

On the occasion of the New Year the kaiser addressed the following order to his army and navy:

"Comrades:—One year of severe fighting has elapsed. Whenever a superior number of enemies tried to rush our lines they failed before your loyalty and bravery. Every place where I sent you into battle you gained glorious victories. Thankfully we remember to-day above all our brethren who joyfully gave their blood in order to gain security for our beloved ones at home and imperishable glory for the Fatherland. What they began we shall accomplish with God's gracious help.

"In impotent madness our enemies from west and east, from north and south, still strive to deprive us of all that makes life worth living. The hope of conquering us in fair fighting they have buried long ago. On the weight of their masses, on the starvation of our entire people, on the influence of their campaign of calumny, which is as mischievous as malicious, they believe they can still reckon. Their plans will not succeed. Their hopes will be miserably disappointed in the presence of the spirit of determination which imperturbably unites the army and those at home.

"With a will to do one's duty for the Fatherland to the last breath, and a determination to secure victory, we enter the new year with God for the protection of the Fatherland and for Germany's greatness."

About the same time Count Zeppelin delivered a speech at Düsseldorf. The local newspapers reported him as saying: "Speaking for myself and expressing the view of your Imperial Master, the war will not last two years. The next few months will see German arms march rapidly from triumph to triumph, and the final destruction of our enemies will be swift and sudden. Our Zeppelin fleets will play an important part in future operations and will demonstrate more than ever their power as a factor in modern warfare."

The opening of the year 1916 found Great Britain in the throes of a momentous controversy over the question of adopting conscription. In the west the Franco-British armies hugged the belief that their lines were impregnable to attack. An offensive on the part of the Germans was certainly expected, but where and when it would materialize none could foretell, though the French command had a shrewd suspicion. It was purely a matter of deduction that the Germans, having so far failed to break a passage through the circle of steel that encompassed them on the east and the west, would be forced to concentrate their hopes on an offensive on the western front. They had carefully taken into consideration the Battle of Champagne. They admitted that the French had opened a breach in their line, and they would probably argue that the imperfect results of the operations were due only to the inability of their enemies to exploit the first advantage that they had gained. They appear to have decided to copy the French example, but to apply to it the German touch of thoroughness. The French, they might argue, fired so many shells on a front of so many miles and destroyed our trenches; we will fire so many more shells on a narrower front, so that we can be certain there will be no obstacle to the advance of our infantry. The French had not enough men to carry their initial success to its conclusion, consequently we will mass a very large number of men behind the attack. With this object undoubtedly in view, the Germans indulged in a succession of feints up and down the whole frontier, feeling and probing the line at all points. This procedure cost them thousands of men, but it probably did not deceive the strategists on the other side. All that remained indeterminable to the French Staff was the precise date and locality.

A general survey of the front for the first days of January, 1916, reveals activity all round. In Belgium there was artillery fighting over the front of the Yser and along the front at Yperlee, and a similar duel between Germans and Belgians near Mercken. In front of the British first-line trenches the Germans sprang mines, but did not trouble to take possession of the craters. The British sprang some mines near La Poisselu and

bombarded the German trenches north of Fromelles and east of Ypres, the Germans responding vigorously.

The British also attempted a night attack near Frelinghien, northeast of Armentières, which failed in its purpose. German troops cracked a mine at Hulluch and captured a French trench at Hartmannsweilerkopf with 200 prisoners. The French heavy artillery in Champagne directed a strong fire against some huts occupied by Germans in the forest of Malmaison. A German attack with hand grenades in the vicinity of the Tahure road did little harm. Between the Arve and the Oise artillery exchanges were in continual progress; between Soissons and Rheims a series of mine explosions; and in the Vosges the French artillery roared in the vicinity of Mühlbach. A German long-range gun fired about ten shots at Nancy and its environments, killing two civilians and wounding seven others.

In the north, again, we find the German artillery making a big demonstration on the front east of Ypres and northeast of Loos; the British destroying the outskirts of Andechy in the region of Roye. French and Belgian guns batter the Germans stationed to the east of St. George and shell other groups about Boesinghe and Steenstraete. South of the Somme the German first-line trenches near Dompierre are receiving artillery attention, and a supply train south of Chaulnes is shattered. In Champagne the Tahure skirmish goes on, while in the Vosges an artillery duel of great intensity rends the air in the Hirzstein sector.

Along the Yser front the Belgians are shelled in the rear of their lines, and a German barracks is being bombarded. On the southern part of the British front bomb attacks are being carried out. With all this sporadic and disconnected expenditure of life, energy and ammunition little damage is done, and the losses and gains on either side are equally unimportant. The Germans are tapping against the wall, looking for weak spots. By the 5th, however, when General Joffre's New Year's message appears, in which he tells his armies that the enemy is weakening, that enemy suddenly grows more active and energetic. German artillery fire increased in violence

throughout Flanders, Artois, Champagne, and the Vosges. They launched infantry attacks against the French between Hill 193 and the Butte de Tahure. North of Arras the French bombarded German troops in the suburbs of Roye; in the Vosges they shelled German works in the region of Balschwiller, and demolished some trenches and a munitions depot northwest of Altkirch.

British aeroplanes dropped bombs on the aerodrome at Douai, and a German aviator dropped a few on Boulogne. The German War Office statement briefly announced that "fighting with artillery and mines at several points on the Franco-Belgian front is reported." The next few days are almost a blank; hardly anything leaks out; but things are happening all the same.

To the south of Hartmannsweilerkopf, after a series of fruitless attacks, followed by a severe bombardment, the Germans succeeded in recovering the trenches which they had lost to the French on December 31, 1915. Besides that, they also captured 20 officers, 1,083 chasseurs, and 15 machine guns. This move compelled the French troops occupying the summit of Hirzstein to evacuate their position. Artillery incessantly thundered in Flanders, Champagne, Artois, the Vosges, and on the British lines at Hulluch and Armentières. By January 10, 1916, it looked as though the Germans intended to retrieve the misfortunes of Champagne. An assault by the kaiser's troops under General von Einem was made on a five-mile front east of Tahure, with the center about at Maisons de Champagne Farm, close to the Butte de Mesnil. At this point the French had held well to the ground won during the previous September. On the 9th the German artillery opened fire with great violence, using suffocating shells, and this was followed by four concentric infantry attacks on that front during the day and night. The French fire checked the offensive, but at two points the Germans managed to reach the first French lines. The battle raged for three days, during which the Germans took a French observation post, several hundred yards of trenches, 423 prisoners, seven machine guns, and eight mine throwers.

The French counterattack broke down, though it was claimed that they had recovered the ground.

At Massiges the Germans attacked on almost as large a scale as the French had done the previous autumn. The German bombardment increased steadily in intensity, and during the last twelve hours 400,000 shells were stated to have fallen on the eight-mile front from La Courtine to the western slopes of the "Hand" of Massiges. The infantry were thrown forward on the 10th. The first attack was launched on the hill forming the western finger of Massiges, whence the French fire broke their ranks and drove them back. Foiled in this direction, the next attack was delivered against the five-mile front. Some 40,000 men took part in the charge. But the powerful French "seventy-fives" tore ghastly lanes in their ranks, and few lived to reach the wire entanglements. Crawling through the holes made by the bombardment, they captured 300 yards of trenches. A portion of this the French regained. The British lost four aeroplanes on January 12-13, 1916. Two German aviators accounted for one each, and the other two were brought down by gunfire.

The Prussian Prime Minister, Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg, who is also Imperial Chancellor, opened the new session of the Prussian Diet on January 13, 1916. In reading the speech from the throne, he said: "As our enemies forced the war upon us, they must also bear the guilt of the responsibility if the nations of Europe continue to inflict wounds upon one another."

By the 13th the German offensive in Champagne had collapsed. Operations in the west resumed for the time a normal state of activity, in which artillery duels were the main features. In the middle of January the British opened fire on the French town of Lille, near the Belgian border and inside the German lines. According to German authority, the damage done was negligible. Little of import happened till January 23, 1916, when two squadrons of French aeroplanes, comprising twenty-four machines, bombarded the railway station and barracks at Metz. They dropped 130 shells. The aeros were escorted by two pro-

tecting squadrons, the pilots of which during the trip engaged in ten combats with giant Fokkers and aviatiks. The French machines were severely cannonaded along the whole of their course, but returned undamaged, except one only, which was obliged to make a landing southeast of Metz. On the 24th the Germans made another strong feint, this time in Belgium, that had all the appearance of the expected attack in force. They began by bombarding the French lines near Nieuport, but the infantry charge that was to have followed was smothered in the German trenches, before the men could make a start. Another German attack north of Arras was held up by French rifle fire. The chief result of the offensive seems to have been the destruction of Nieuport cathedral.

Toward the end of January, 1916, activity became more and more intensified all along the western front in every sector except that in which the Germans were preparing for the big coup—Verdun. It will be simpler to review the disconnected operations by following them separately in the different districts where they occurred. It will be observed that in practically every case the Germans assumed the offensive. In Alsace the French batteries exploded a German munitions depot on the outskirts of Orbey, southeast of Bonhomme. In the region of Sondernach, south of Münster, the Germans captured and occupied a French listening post, from which they were expelled by counterattacks. On February 13, 1916, they attempted an infantry attack, which was halted by French artillery fire. The Germans gained 300 feet of trenches on the 14th. The French took the ground back again, but were unable to hold it. On the 18th the Germans, after the usual artillery preparation, directed an infantry attack against the French position to the north of Largitson, where they penetrated into the trenches and remained there for some hours until a counterattack expelled them. In Lorraine, constant artillery duels raged in the sectors of Reillon and the forest of Parroy. In the Argonne, French mine operations destroyed the German trenches over a short distance near Hill 285, northeast of La Chalade. On February 12, 1916, the French shattered some enemy mine works.

Increased artillery firing at many points in Flanders and northern France first gave the Allies the impression that the Germans were planning a new offensive on a large scale against their left wing, in an attempt to blast a passage through to Calais and Dunkirk. By February 7, 1916, the Allies were thoroughly awake to the possibility of a big blow impending somewhere in the west. The sweep through Serbia had released several hundred thousand men for service elsewhere. For a month the Germans had been hammering and probing at Loos, Givenchy, Armentières, and other points with the evident object of finding a weak spot. Along the Neuville-Givenchy road especially the Germans made no fewer than twenty-five determined attacks between the 1st and 17th of February, 1916. Their later attacks developed more to the north, near Lièvin, where heavy trench fighting occurred, with no important results either way.

At the beginning of February, 1916, the 525-mile battle front in the west was held on one side by about 1,250,000 Germans—an average of 2,500 to the mile—as against quite 2,000,000 French, about 1,000,000 British, and 50,000 Belgians. But this superiority in numbers on the allied side was neutralized by the strength of the German defense works plus artillery. None of the Allies' undertakings had, so far, been carried out to its logical —or intended—conclusion. Whether this was due to weakness, infirmity of purpose or lack of coordination, remains to be told some future day. By the middle of the month it became apparent, from their expenditure of men and munitions, that the German General Staff were determined to make up for their past losses and to recapture at least some of the ground taken from them by the Allies. It seems hardly credible that all these fierce attacks were mere feints to withdraw attention from their objective—Verdun. They had no reason to fear a French offensive in the immediate future. For one thing the condition of the ground was still too unfavorable. The French at this stage occupied practically the entire semicircle from Hill 70 to the town of Thelus, excepting a portion between Givenchy and Petit Vimy. Hill 140, the predominant feature in the district, was almost all in French hands. The line between La Folie and the junction of

the Neuville-St. Vaast road covered the Labyrinth, which the French had won in the summer of 1915, and it was here that the main force of the German attacks was launched. The French positions on the heights commanded every other position that the Germans could possibly take within the semicircle, and naturally gave the former an immense advantage for their next offensive.

In Artois the Germans exploded several mines on January 26, 1916, in the neighborhood of the road from La Folie, northeast of Neuville-St. Vaast, and occupied the craters made. Violent cannonading kept up in the whole of this sector. By the 28th the Germans had captured three successive lines of French trenches and held them against eight counterattacks. After exploding mines the Germans made an attack on both sides of the road between Vimy and Neuville and stormed French positions between 500 and 600 yards long. They captured fifty-three men, a machine gun, and three mine throwers. On the 28th they directed infantry attacks against various points and gained more trenches. Following up their advantage the Germans stormed and captured the village of Frise, on the south bank of the Somme.

While this struggle was in progress, a terrific fight was raging north of Arras. The real objective of the attack appears to have been an advance south of Frise in the direction of Dompierre, but this effort met with little success. The French at once set to work to recover the only ground that was of any real importance. The troops in the section opened a series of counterattacks, and in a very short time the French grenadiers had gained the upper hand again. The capture of Frise brought the Germans into a cul-de-sac, for their advance was still barred by the Somme Canal, behind which there lay a deep marsh. Maneuvers were quite impossible here, hence the village could not serve as a base for any further operations. The German gains were nevertheless considerable, for they took about 3,800 yards of trenches and nearly 1,300 prisoners, including several British. Spirited mine fighting marked the first three days of February, 1916. In the neighborhood of the road from Lille the French

artillery fire caused explosions among the German batteries in the region of Vimy. Between February 8-9, 1916, the German infantry stormed the first-line French positions over a stretch of more than 800 yards, capturing 100 prisoners and five machine guns. Small sections of these trenches were retaken and held.

The German report stated that the French "were unable to reconquer any part of their lost positions." Five German attacks were made on Hill 140 on February 11, 1916, all but one being repulsed by the intense fire of the French artillery and infantry. Stubborn fighting, accompanied by heavy losses, raged about the 14th, by which time the French had regained a few more trenches. The steady underground advance of the French sappers drove the Germans back upon their last bastion, commanding the central plain.

The French trenches gradually crept up the slopes of the hill until the German commander, the Bavarian Crown Prince, realized that the next assault was likely to be irresistible and to involve the abandonment of Lille, Lens, Douai, and the entire front at this point. A mine explosion west of Hill 140 made a crater fifty yards across. A steeplechase dash across the open from both sides—French and Germans met in the crater—a fierce struggle for its possession followed, and the French won the hole. A furious bombardment from a score of quick-firing mortars hidden behind La Folie Hill battered the earth out of shape, and when the Germans occupied the terrain where the French trenches had been, the "seventy-fives" played such havoc among them that they were forced to relinquish their hold. To the south of Frise the Germans were preparing an attack, but were prevented from carrying it out by French and British barrier fires.

On the British front the artillery was hardly less active than in Artois. On one section, according to a German report, the British fired 1,700 shrapnel shells, 700 high explosive shells, and about the same number of bombs within twenty-four hours. On January 27, 1916, the Germans attempted an infantry attack on a salient northeast of Loos, but were held back. A British

night attack on the German trenches near Messines, Flanders, was likewise repulsed. In the morning of February 12, 1916, the Germans broke into the British trenches near Pilkellen, but were pushed out by bombing parties. There was much mining activity about Hulluch and north of the Ypres-Comines Canal. At the latter place some desperate underground fighting occurred between sappers. On the 14th the Germans were again engaged in serious operations in the La Bassée region, where they exploded seven mines on the British front.

By February 15, 1916, the British first-line trenches on a 600 to 800 yards' front fell to the Germans in assaults on the Ypres salient, carried by a bayonet charge after artillery preparation. Most of the defenders were killed and forty prisoners taken. The assaults extended over a front of more than two miles. The trench now captured by the Germans had frequently changed hands during the past twelve months, and for that reason was facetiously called "the international trench." The brunt of the fighting here fell upon the Canadians, who were withdrawn from the trench owing to the furious bombardment, and sheltered in the second-line trench. The German infantry consequently met with no opposition at the former, but when they approached the latter the Canadians opened a murderous fire with rifles and machine guns, dropping their enemies in hundreds. A few, however, managed to reach the trenches, when the Canadians sprang out and charged with bayonets, rushed the Germans back to and across the first-line trenches again, which were then reoccupied. It was the Canadian First Division that had blocked the German path to Calais in the spring of 1915 almost at the same point.

Activity on the west front on the 18th was largely confined to the Ypres district. British troops attempted to recapture their positions to the south of Ypres, simultaneously bombarding the German trenches to the north of the Comines Canal. By February 20, 1916, as a result of the continuous fighting north of Ypres, the British had lost on the Yser Canal what the German official report described as a position 350 meters long, and the British statement as "an unimportant advanced post." The

Germans took some prisoners and repelled several day and night attacks by the British to recover the ground.

In Champagne, uninterrupted artillery actions continued apparently without much advantage to either side. The German works north of Souain were particularly visited. On February 5, 1916, the French bombarded the German works on the plateau of Navarin, wrecking trenches and blowing up several munition depots. Some reservoirs of suffocating gas were also demolished, releasing the poisonous fumes, which the wind blew back across the German lines. On the 13th the French were able to report a further success northeast of the Butte du Mesnil, where they took some 300 yards of German trenches. A counterattack by night was also repulsed, the Germans losing sixty-five prisoners. They succeeded, though, in penetrating a small salient of the French line between the road from Navarin and that of the St. Souplet. They also captured, on the 12th, some sections of advanced trenches between Tahure and Somme-Py, gaining more than 700 yards of front.

In the Vosges a similar series of local engagements occupied the combatants. Artillery exchanges played the chief part in the operations. Three big shells from a German long-range gun fell in the fortress town of Belfort and its environs on February 8, 1916. The French replied by bombarding the German cantonments at Stosswier, northwest of Münster, Hirtzbach, south of Altkirch, and the military establishments at Dornach, near Mühlhausen. On the 11th ten more heavy shells fell about Belfort. North of Wissembach, east of St. Dié, a German infantry charge met with a withering fire and was stopped before it reached the first line.

While all the fighting just described was in progress, matters were comparatively on a peace footing in the Argonne Forest. The French and Germans engaged in mine operations, smashing up inconsiderable pieces of each other's trenches and mine works. But it was here that affairs of great historic import, perhaps the mightiest event of the war, were in the making.

In an interview given to the editor of the "Secolo" of Milan, at the end of January, 1916, Mr. Lloyd-George, the British Min-

ister of Munitions, said: "We woke up slowly to it, but I am now perfectly satisfied with what we are doing. We have now 2,500 factories, employing 1,500,000 men and 250,000 women. By spring we shall have turned out an immense amount of munitions. We shall have for the first time in the war more than the enemy. Our superiority in men and munitions will be unquestioned, and I think that the war for us is just beginning. We have 3,000,000 men under arms; by spring we shall have a million more. . . . Our victory must be a real and final victory. You must not think of a deadlock. One must crack the nut before one gets at the kernel. It may take a long time, but you must hear the crack. The pressure on the enemy is becoming greater. They are spreading their frontiers temporarily, but becoming weaker in a military sense. Make no mistake about it; Great Britain is determined to fight this war to a finish. We may make mistakes, but we do not give in. It was the obstinacy of Great Britain that wore down Napoleon after twenty years of warfare. Her allies broke away one by one, but Great Britain kept on. Our Allies on this occasion are just as solid and determined as we are."

CHAPTER X

THE STRUGGLE FOR VERDUN

AT four o'clock in the morning of Sunday, February 20, 1916, the inhabitants of Verdun were awakened from their slumbers by the bursting of a gigantic shell over their heads. It was the Germans ringing up the curtain for another act in the great tragedy. "The greatest battle in the world's history" had been fought on at least six different occasions during the war, and this grandiose description certainly fitted every time. But the greatest of all was now to come. As before on the Dunajec, the Germans had spent months in fully working out their plans with masterly preparation and sustained development. First the whole allied front was tested and, in a sense,

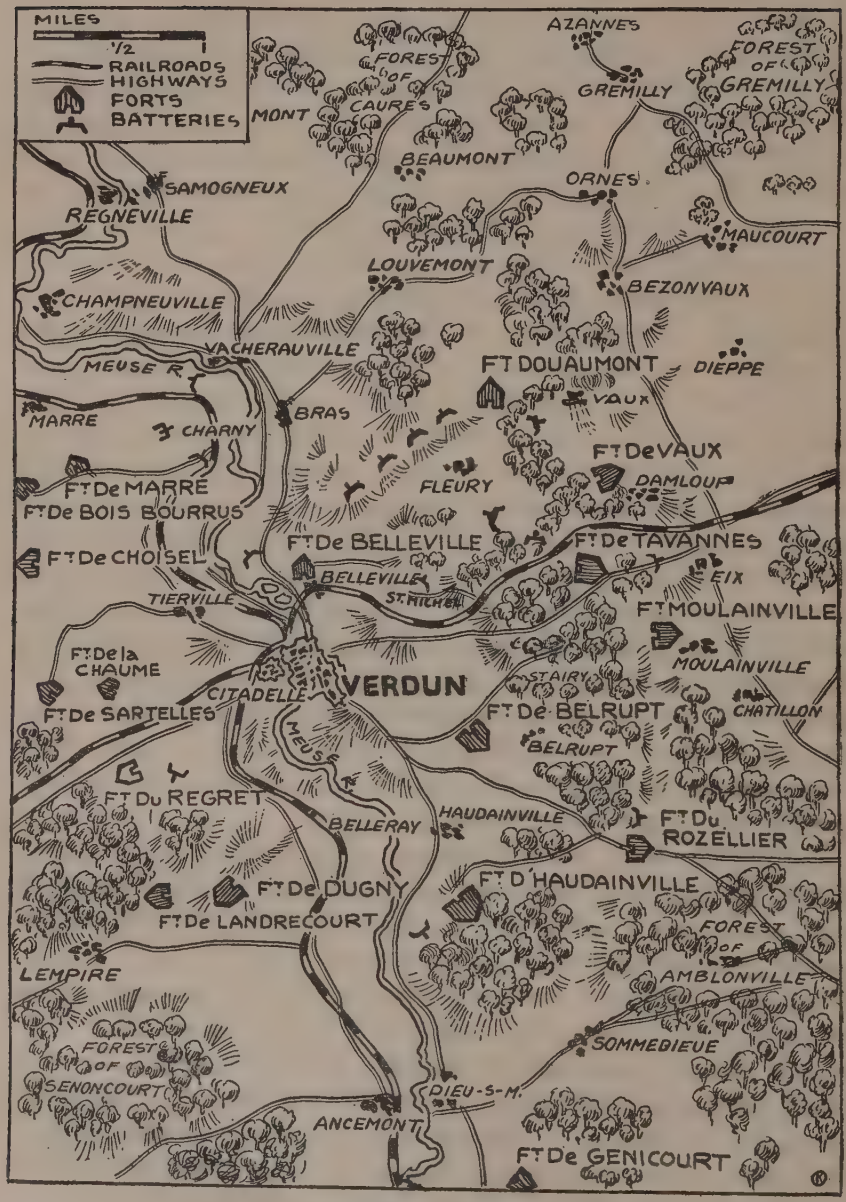
held by assaults on every sector. Belfort was bombarded at one wing-tip, the Yser threatened on the other. In the Vosges, in Picardy south of the Somme, at various places in Artois and elsewhere, as near Ypres, the Germans had captured lengths of front trenches ranging from a quarter to half a mile in width, and had made short, sharp penetrations. These were feints made to look as much as possible like real offensives, so as to keep the Allies uncertain and retard their concentration on some one sector to be far more heavily assailed. This was all in the regular order of strategic business. As a matter of course, they had to pay a full price for the preliminaries. All indications pointed to a fiercer shock. Germany could not afford to wait for the Allies' hour of greater strength, surer combination, more determined initiative. Much less could the Germans wait for the possible decline of their effectives in the field. Those who conceive a war of exhaustion as a fight almost to a military vacuum on one side or the other, frame in their minds no realistic picture that even approximates the true inwardness of the case. Freezing point is reached long before zero; you go bankrupt long before you come to nothing on the dollar. Even in a war of exhaustion your power of resistance against a superior enemy is broken under modern conditions when your reserves are not only spent, but when your field armies have dwindled to a percentage of the numbers which formerly maintained or advanced the fronts.

One of two courses lay open to the German General Staff. Since on any theory the total losses must reach a certain figure within a certain period, would it be better to condense the risk or to diffuse it? Would it be better to spread out the casualties in a way sinking slowly — perhaps certainly— toward ultimate defeat, or to face huge immediate losses upon the reckoning that at the best a desperate attempt might mean victory and at the worst earlier defeat would only anticipate the inevitable? Would the tamer policy be, indeed, the safer? Would not the more hazardous be the wiser?

The resolve once taken, the choice of Verdun as the great objective would naturally follow—for plain reasons. In spite

of the width of its circuit, and the elaborate strength of its defenses, Verdun was the most exposed salient to be found on any front. The German positions had long swept round it on three-fifths of a circle. If they could once break through they would throw down the strongest obstacle on the main road of invasion from Metz to Paris. All their armies in the war would be thrilled with exultation and, thinking nothing beyond them, would be nerved to new attempts. And here, where there was so much at stake, the Germans had also certain advantages. They had much fuller railway facilities for attack than had the French for defense. The scene was not far from Metz on one hand, from Luxemburg on the other. It was nearest to Germany and in touch with the most direct routes to the western German military bases and munition factories. Into this area reenforcements and shell could be most quickly poured. Finally, we must remember the nature of the country to understand why this terrific onslaught bore down on Verdun straight from the north. Attacking on the east directly from Metz and its neighborhood, the Germans would have had to make a practically hopeless attempt to scale from the clayey plain of the Woevre, the steepest face of the Meuse heights. But to the north they were already established on the northern edge of those heights, and could start on a more or less level footing with their opponents. It is a tumbled country of hills and hollows, covered with fir and larch woods, now swept into ghastly wreckage.

The French were not unprepared. For two months this very movement had been expected. The French Higher Command were well aware that the crown prince's army had been strengthened by picked corps and masses of reenforcements from Russia. There was an enormous accumulation of German guns of all calibers. The French lines had been keenly reconnoitered from the air. The kaiser's heir was assisted by the counsels of General von Haesler, the aged veteran who formerly held the Metz command, and ranked among the sagest authorities on this region. Further, a victory or success of some kind for the crown prince would be of dynastic value, for his previous successes in the war were framed on an extremely modest scale.



THE FORTS AT VERDUN

The "Russky Invalid," the official organ of the Russian army, on February 26, 1916, published a highly interesting account of the war council held in Berlin at which the decision to attack Verdun was taken. It asserted that the Prussian and Bavarian Crown Princes strongly favored an attack on the French front at Verdun, but that both the field marshals, Von Hindenburg and Von Mackensen, opposed the plan, contending that it would be better to develop the operations already planned against the Russian front, because it would be necessary, if the plan of the princes were adopted, to send to France reserves specially trained for Russian warfare. Von Hindenburg was also reported to have said that the chances of success on the Russian front were greater. He was said to have had little hope of the operations against Verdun and to have feared an adverse effect on the moral of the army in case of failure. These arguments, the newspaper added, did not prevail, and Emperor William supported the crown princes.

The Germans attempted their surprise by making their opening bombardment short. Unlike the Allies' former example, it lasted only one day. All accounts agree that it was of indescribable fury and weight, so that even the Allies' hurricane preparations in Champagne were outdone to an incredible extent. A colossal German effort at superpreparation in this way was the most obvious of certainties. The Sunday bombardment swept over a wide front to the north on both sides of the Meuse. On Monday the infantry assault began on the rugged and relatively narrow sector some ten miles wide between the village of Brabant, resting on the Meuse itself, and Ornes, upon the eastern fringe of the heights. A doubtful point in the story is the question of the total numbers the Germans actually put into this particular assault. The French only knew definitely at the beginning of the week that seven corps were in their immediate front, but seven corps at war strength could only parade 175,000 bayonets, and for a long time past it was doubted whether the Germans had ever paraded with even two-thirds of their normal effectives; clearly even this 175,000 would have been an inadequate number with which to attempt an attack of

this magnitude, which was bound to be protracted over many days and spread upon so wide an area.

The French line held well on both wings. Under the immediate supervision of their kaiser the Germans advanced in dense masses against the positions distant some fifteen kilometers from the permanent works of the fortress. The direct objective of the attack was the field fortifications prepared in the autumn of 1914 by General Sarrail. The Verdun circuit, being not only a salient but standing at an angle or elbow of the French front where it bends from the northward to the eastward view, offered an opportunity for a converging assault—without the usual risk of being enfiladed if the attack progressed—such as existed nowhere else between the Vosges and the sea.

The problem was how to surprise and overwhelm the French. It could hardly be hoped in this struggle as in the old way of war to surprise by the use of time and direction. The Germans determined to surprise by sheer weight of metal and men. Their achievements in this particular after nineteen months of experience were already recognized by the Allies, and will always be remembered as a masterpiece of soldiership. As was the case before the breaking of the Russians on the Dunajec, the hills and woods were used to conceal the full proportion of the artillery concentration. The Germans not only bettered the example of the Allies in Champagne and Artois during the September, 1915, battles, but went beyond it to a staggering extreme only made possible by equal audacity and labor.

Roads were made through the woods, and up the slopes, firm foundations had been laid down, the heavy guns were dragged up. As a result of these weeks of herculean toil, there were massed on that narrow sector over a thousand guns, more than half of them consisting of pieces ranging from 12- to 17-inch caliber. When these unparalleled batteries belched out their drum fire against the French the tops and slopes of the hills were smashed and torn until the face of nature became a dance of distortion. The Germans had the range of everything in sight before opening with their concealed mass of metal.

The French line was driven in on the center, where the natural position was weaker. The Germans, desperately repulsed again and again in the struggle for the French second positions, won the Haumont Wood and most of the Bois des Caures, north of Beaumont. That night the Germans pushed farther on. On Tuesday morning the French, under a titanic deluge of high explosives, knew that this was to be one of the greatest actions of the war. Despite a devastating fire, the Germans coming on in solid masses, such as had not been seen since the second Battle of Ypres, captured the village of Haumont, in itself an insignificant hamlet of twenty or thirty houses, but so placed that it pinched and threatened to sever the French left wing, now fighting on a narrow spur with its back to the river.

That night Brabant had to be abandoned by the French, and on Wednesday they had finally to relinquish the entire Bois des Caures, where they had recovered a footing. But these movements exposed other points and rendered them untenable. Samogneux, at the loop of the river, was lost on Thursday, as was Herbebois, on the other side, near the edge of the Woevre. On Friday morning the bold hill of Beaumont had to be given up. The French, extricated for the moment from the awkward and confused area they were in when attacked, were now established on a fairly straight line of strong positions from Champneuville, overlooking the loop of the river, to southward of Ornes, where the ground drops down to the Woevre. There it was hoped that the enemy might be firmly checked. That hope, however, was doomed to disappointment. Keeping up the obliterating tempest of shell and throwing into action still denser masses of troops, wave after wave, the Germans pushed on with redoubled vehemence and utter disregard for life.

On Friday afternoon they broke through the straightened French line and scored their greatest tactical triumph of the week by storming Fort Douaumont. This work is at the northeast angle of the outer circuit of the fixed fortifications of Verdun. The Germans had broken over ridge after ridge of this rugged country of crests and troughs, and were within four miles of Verdun at several points. On Friday evening

they had won the heights overlooking the loop of the Meuse. They threatened Pepper Hill, giving further command of the shortest road along the river. Above all, they were established late at night only a few hundred yards from the shell of the dismantled fort crowning the main hill of Douaumont. The Germans apparently resolved to carry that point at any cost, and were well placed on two sides for the attack. They prepared during the night.

At seven o'clock on Saturday morning the crest was ravaged by an infernal concentration of fire. Seventeen-inch howitzers pulverized the fixed works, whence the French, however, had thoughtfully removed the guns some days before. After an hour picked corps were hurled to the assault. They dashed on over the snow in the light of the winter morning in heavy force and with the last degree of methodical bravery. Their foremost ranks were torn and mown by the French guns, but they so far outnumbered the defenders that enough Germans were left to win the head and shoulders of the hill, and the fiery Brandenburgers carried the fort.

At this stage the German staff had what may be called—without disrespect—a premature seizure. A special bulletin was issued announcing that Douaumont was "fast in our hands." Great was the rejoicing thereat in Germany; cities, towns, and villages broke out into bunting. But a most extraordinary sequel followed the victory. General Pétain, in a temper worthy of Napoleon, had stood the shock and reserved his utmost effort until the Germans had made theirs. They (the Germans) were rushing up fresh divisions in the hope of seizing the decisive moment to force progress. These reenforcements, rent by the French guns, were literally ripped to bits when the French reserves, brigade after brigade, swept out right and left for the counterattack. Avoiding the crest of Douaumont, they cleared both shoulders of the hill, advanced beyond, recovered the village, and from the Côte de Poivre (Pepper Heights), above the Meuse, to the steeps of the Woevre, established themselves on both sides far and wide upon a line which the Germans, despite their most desperate efforts, were never again able to break in

the first phase of the battle. The Brandenburgers in the fort were now in the peculiar position of being nearly surrounded. They managed to hold out, however, supplying their needs by an underground passage constructed as part of the old fortifications and leading to some outer work then in the German main line.

A German newspaper correspondent who was permitted to observe the battle from a long distance described the scene in the Berlin "Lokalanzeiger," from which the following is taken:

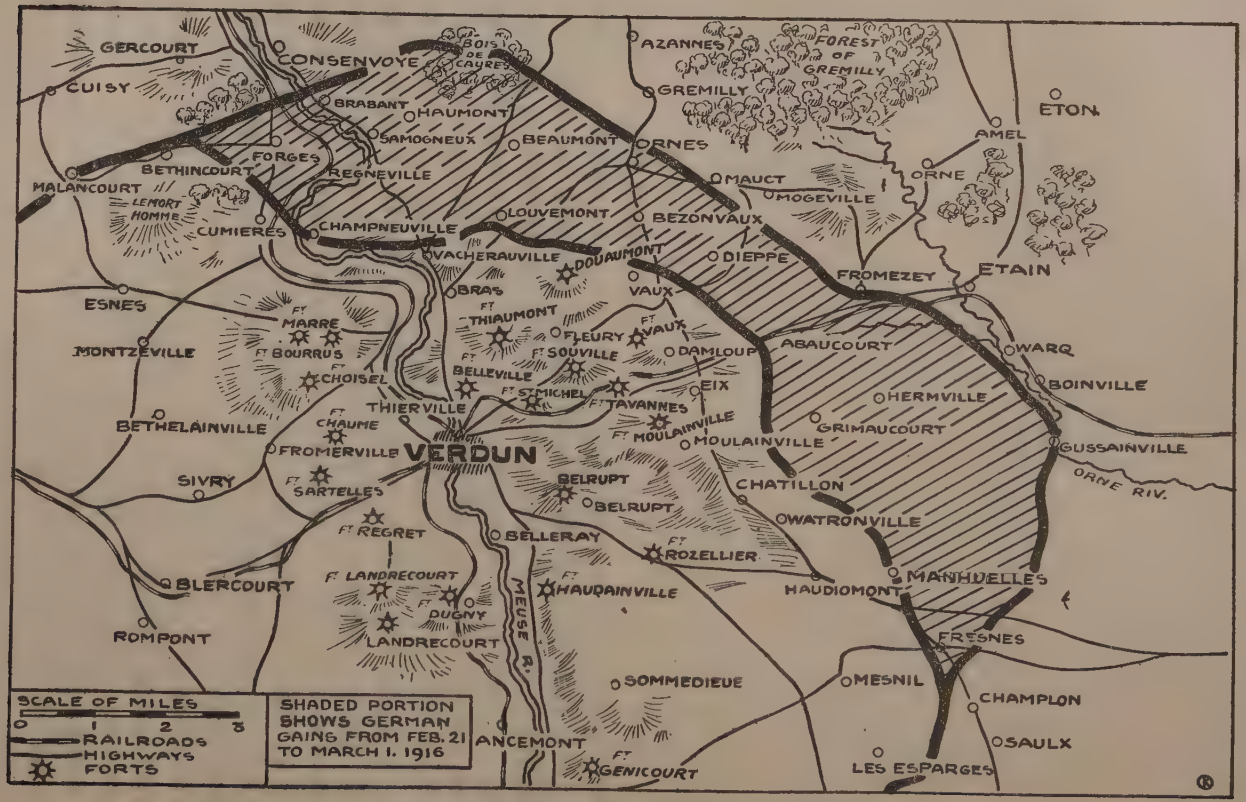
"We could overlook the Woevre plain and see far behind, in the background, that hell of smoke and fire in which an unprecedented artillery fire for the forts and fortified positions of Verdun was raging. . . . At the northern point of this ridge, which is also the highest point, a far-away garland of white shrapnel clouds marked the spot where one could just make out the dim silhouette of the fortress which we had conquered. In the immediate neighborhood of this fortress (Douaumont) the battle was raging with particular fierceness. . . . But how can we describe the hell on the height of the ridge to the left of Douaumont, upon which for kilometers the trench artillery positions extended? As high as a house columns of dust, earth and smoke rose from our bursting shells, and it was almost incomprehensible to us that men could still live there and fight. . . . Numerous wounded passed us. All looked confident and pleased that at last the French war was at an end, and the glorious days of August and September, 1914, apparently came back to them, when our masses were crushing everything before them and were flooding France."

By the night of Saturday, February 26, 1916, the momentum of the German attack was almost spent. When the moon rose over the blood-sprinkled snow, the ravines which had been swept by the French batteries and machine guns were choked with German corpses, and elsewhere the assailants had left their dead in heaps. The French suffered heavily themselves, naturally, but far less than their opponents. In open infantry attacks against machine guns the heaviest casualties invariably are on the side of the attacking force. The French casualties were said to have

numbered some 50,000, including over 10,000 prisoners, while competent observers estimate the German losses at nothing less than 150,000. It must not be imagined that the Germans advanced with that reckless exposure as in the earlier massed assaults in the war. They had since then worked out more economical infantry tactics, otherwise their losses in this terrific contest would have been much higher. They were high enough to wring ill-smothered accents of horror and apprehension even from German criticism. Victory and defeat in this war are measured not by gains or losses of territory, but by relative losses in men. It is here that the silent but inexorable law of "diminishing returns" operates. In a "nibbling" war of attrition, that side which has the larger population to draw from will most probably emerge victorious. Even if the losses were equally divided—man for man—the larger population side would still profit by the deal. That the calculations of the Allies are based on this principle is universally known.

Beginning from Monday, February 28, 1916, there was a pause of sixty hours. It was variously interpreted as a lull or an abandonment of the enterprise. Those best competent to judge, however, realized that Germany was definitely committed to the task and had gone too far not to make an attempt to go farther. Unless bigger results could be obtained the whole operation, however splendidly planned, would have been a mere gamble and a failure. As it turned out the pause was just an interval, and it occurred for reasons that would apply to any army in a similar situation. They begin with the artillery bombardment from prepared positions, and this enables them to push forward for a few miles. After drum fire comes the infantry attack, but then the drum fire must again beat down further obstacles before the next advance can be attempted with any chance of success. The heavy guns have to be brought forward again in support.

On Wednesday, March 1, 1916, the German artillery opened again, concentrating against the Douaumont positions, and after a twelve hours' eruption of high explosives the infantry battle raged once more. Simultaneously attacking from north and



FIGHTING AT VERDUN UP TO MARCH 1, 1916

east, the Germans were shattered and driven back in both directions. Under cover of night they pushed fresh masses of troops well forward to force their way into Douaumont village at dawn. The second stage of the struggle for Verdun has commenced. Here the narrative halts for the time being, the world's attention is riveted on Verdun, and the heart of France is passing through an iron test. The action sways, the spectacular dénouement is still shrouded in doubt. Will the fiery avalanche be thrown back, or will the Germans break through at the Pyrrhic price which sacrifices armies for acres? France fully realizes that the attack on Verdun is no meaningless fight for a city, no mere combat even for local positions. It is a battle for the heights of the Meuse, with a view on the German side to further developments and contingencies bearing on the main affairs at stake in the twentieth month of Armageddon. The onslaught on the eastern barrier of France seems the beginning of movements and countermovements spreading from the immediate cockpit to other quarters, from the west to the east, from the land to the sea.

PART II—THE WAR AT SEA

CHAPTER XI

NAVAL SITUATION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND YEAR—SUBMARINE EXPLOITS

NAVAL events such as the world had never known were believed to be impending at the beginning of the war's second year. With the land forces of the belligerents in a fierce deadlock, it seemed that a decision must come upon the sea. Assuredly the Allies were willing, and Germany had accomplished things in her shipyards that for sheer determination and efficiency developed to the last degree, were comparable to her finest deeds of arms. None doubted that she longed with a grim hope for such a meeting. Helgoland and the newly enlarged Kiel Canal were hives where an intensive industry kept every man and vessel fit. And the navy grew while it waited.

It was not the work of a day, though, nor of a generation, to match the sea power that Great Britain had spent centuries in building. Try as she would, strain men, ordnance plants, and shipyards to the breaking point, Germany could not catch up with her great rival. The first half of the new year saw no matching of the grand fleets. It did produce a few gallant combats, and was marked by a melancholy succession of German submarine attacks on defenseless craft. The sacrifice of lives among neutrals and the Allies cast a pall upon the world.

Naval losses up to August 1, 1915, had been considerable on both sides without crippling any one of the belligerents. No

sooner was a warship sunk than there were two to replace it. Every country engaged took effective steps to preserve such maritime power as it had, and Great Britain worked harder than any of the others, for her existence depended upon it.

The first year of the conflict cost England thirty-two fighting craft, great and small. France lost thirteen, Russia five, Japan three, a total of fifty-three. The combined tonnage was 297,178. To counterbalance this Germany lost sixty-seven war vessels, Turkey five and Austria four, the seventy-six ships having an aggregate tonnage of 206,100. The difference of 91,078 gross tons in favor of Germany and her partners in war was offset by the number of fast German cruisers which fell victims to the Allies, and by the numerical inferiority of the Central Powers' combined fleets.

On August 1, 1915, the naval situation was identical with that of August 1, 1914. Great Britain, aided materially by France, and her other allies, in a lesser degree, stood ready to do battle with the Teuton sea forces whenever opportunity offered. She had won every important engagement with the exception of the clash off the coast of Chile, and could look calmly forward, despite the gnawing of German submarines at her commerce. With every gun and man primed for the fight, with the greatest collection of armed vessels ever known lying at ports, merely awaiting the word, she felt supremely ready.

The lives of 1,550 persons were lost during the first year of the war through the sinking of merchant ships, nearly all of which were torpedoed. This applied to vessels of the Allies alone, twenty-two persons having been lost with neutral ships. The total of tonnage destroyed between February 18, 1915, when the German edict against commercial vessels went into effect, and August 1, 1915, was 450,000 tons, including 152 steamships of more than 500 tons each. This was the heaviest loss ever inflicted on the shipping of the world by any war. But it did not seriously cripple the commerce of either France or England, Germany's two major opponents. Their vessels continued to sail the seven seas, bringing the products of every land to their aid, while Germany and her allies were effectually cut off from prac-

tically all resources except their own. Switzerland and Sweden were the main dependence of Germany for contraband, and the activities of the former were considerably restricted when the Entente Allies really settled down to a blockade of Germany. Austria and impoverished Turkey had no friends to draw upon, but must fight their battles alone except for such assistance as Germany could lend, which did not extend beyond the actual material of war—guns, shells and bullets.

The submarine was Germany's best weapon. She outmatched the Allies on land, but in such a small degree that her most brilliant effort could not win a decisive victory. Meanwhile her opponents grew stronger in an economic way, while the situation in Germany became more strained. By issuing a constantly increasing volume of bank notes against an almost stationary gold reserve she depreciated the value of her mark at home and abroad. In the face of this tangled situation her submarines rendered incalculable aid, destroying and menacing allied commerce. Without them Germany would have been helpless upon the sea, would have ceased to exist as a maritime power. Her first-line ships lay securely in their harbors, unable to venture forth and match the longer-ranged, heavier-gunned vessels of the British, ably supplemented by the French fleet.

Just how many submarines Germany possessed at the beginning of the war cannot be stated. The number probably was in the neighborhood of fifty. That she has lost many of these vessels and built even a larger number is certain. As the conflict grew older Great Britain in particular learned a method of combating them. It was estimated that on August 1, 1915, she had 2,300 small craft specially fitted for running down submarines. Private yachts, trawlers, power boats, destroyers, and torpedo boats hunted night and day for the elusive undersea boats of her enemy. The pleasure and fishing craft which had been impressed into service were equipped with all sorts of guns, some of them very old ones, but thoroughly capable of sinking a submarine. These vessels patrolled the British coast with a zeal that cost Germany dear. Some authorities believed that up to August 1, 1915, upward of fifty German submarines had been

sunk and more than a dozen captured. The numbers probably are excessive, but if they had disposed of even twenty-five undersea boats the effort was a distinct success.

In addition to this means of defense Great Britain embarked upon another undertaking that truly was gigantic in its extent and the difficulties imposed. She stretched wire nets for many miles under the surface of the waters washing her shores. The regular channel routes were thus guarded. Once within such a net there was no escape for the submarine. The wire meshes fouled their propellers or became entwined around the vessels in a way that rendered them helpless. The commander must either come to the surface and surrender or end the career of himself and crew beneath the waves. A number of submarines were brought to the surface with their crews dead by their own hands. Others were captured, and it is said that about twenty of these vessels have been commissioned in the British navy.

The hazardous character of the work in which the submarine engaged and the success of British defensive measures undoubtedly made it difficult for Germany to man her new undersea craft. Special training is essential for both crew and officers, and men of particularly robust constitution are required. There have been reports that men assigned to the German submarines regarded their selection as a practical death warrant. Despite the fine courage of German sailors as evidenced in this war, word filtered through the censorship that it was becoming difficult for Germany to secure men for her submarines.

But the venturesome spirit of many German submarine commanders knew no bounds. Previous to the period under consideration at least one submarine had made its way from a German base to the Dardanelles, establishing a record for craft of this sort that had seemed impossible up to that time. During August other submarines made the same trip without any untoward event. The Allies knew full well that reenforcements were being sent to the Mediterranean, but seemed unable to prevent the plan's success. This inability was to result in serious losses to both the allied navies and their merchant shipping.

The first event during the month of August, 1915, that bore any naval significance was the sinking of the British destroyer *Lynx* on August 9, 1915, in the North Sea. She struck a mine and foundered within a few minutes. Four officers and twenty-two men out of a complement in the neighborhood of 100 were saved. The vicinity had been swept only a day or two before for mines and it was believed that a German undersea boat had strewn new mines which caused the loss.

Another British war vessel was sunk the next day. The auxiliary cruiser *India* fell prey to a submarine while entering the roads at Restfjord, Sweden, on the steamship lane between England and Archangel, Russia's northernmost port. Eighty of the crew, estimated at more than 300 men, were saved by Swedish craft. The attack came without warning and furnished another illustration of the submarine's deadly effectiveness under certain conditions. The *India,* a Peninsular and Oriental liner before the war, was well known to many travelers. Built in 1896, she had a registry of 7,900 tons, and was in the eastern service for a number of years.

After many months of idleness a clash came in the North Sea on August 12, 1915. The *Ramsay,* a small patrol vessel, met and engaged the German auxiliary *Meteor.* Although outmatched, the British ship closed with her foe and kept up the fight for an hour. The cannonade attracted a flotilla of cruisers, which came up too late to save the *Ramsay,* but which did succeed in cutting off the *Meteor.*

Four officers and thirty-nine members of the crew were picked up by the Germans when their antagonist went down and these, together with the crew of the *Meteor,* took to the German's boats when her commander saw that escape was impossible. He blew up his ship and by a combination of pluck, good seamanship, and a favorable fortune managed to elude the cordon of British cruisers, reaching the German shore with his prisoners. The total crew of the *Ramsay* was slightly more than 100 men.

Two successful attacks in four days on British war vessels, and the loss of a third by a mine, stirred official circles, and demand was made in the papers that redoubled precautions be

taken. It was believed that the adventure of the *Meteor* into hostile waters heralded further activity by the German fleet, but the days passed without incident, and the British naval forces settled down to the old routine of watching and waiting.

While these events were transpiring in the North Sea the British had not been idle elsewhere. From the beginning of operations in the Dardanelles attempts had been made to penetrate the Bosphorus and sink one of the Turk's capital ships. A number of sailing vessels and one or two transports had been sunk by British submarines in that sea, but efforts to locate the larger warships of the enemy failed until August 9, 1915. On that day the *Kheyr-ed Din Barbarossa,* a battleship of 9,900 tons and a complement of 600 men, was sent to the bottom. The attack took place within the Golden Horn, at Constantinople, and the event spread consternation in the Turkish capital. It was the first time on record that a hostile warship had penetrated the land-locked waters of the Ottoman city, so favored by nature that attack had seemed impossible there.

The *Barbarossa,* although an ancient ship as war vessels are rated, carried four 12-inch guns and was a formidable fighting craft, having been overhauled by German engineers about a year before the war started. Along with the *Goeben* and *Breslau,* which took refuge at Constantinople on the outbreak of hostilities, and were "sold" to Turkey, she constituted the Turk's chief naval arm.

News of the feat was received with enthusiasm in England, coming as the initial achievement of the sort by a British submarine. It helped salve the wounds to British pride, made by repeated disasters through the medium of German undersea boats. The event was one of the few bright episodes from an Ally standpoint in the campaign to capture Constantinople, and was taken to mean that a new tide had set in for the attackers. It did serve to clear the Sea of Marmora of Turkish shipping, and supplies for the beleaguered forces at the tip of Gallipoli Peninsula were henceforth carried by a single track railway or transport. It also inspired a healthy respect among the Turks for enemy submarines.

A few days later, August 16, 1915, another German submarine was to set a new record. Early in the morning of that day the towns of Whitehaven, Parton, and Harrington, on the western coast of England, were aroused in succession by the boom of guns and the falling of shells in their streets. It was believed for a few frenzied moments that the German fleet had come. But merely one lone submarine had made the attack. This was enough to cause considerable alarm, particularly when it was seen that a gas plant at Whitehaven had caught fire. There were other fires in the same town and at Harrington, none of which did much damage.

Once more the undersea boat of the enemy had scored. Not since 1778 had the towns smelled hostile powder. In that year John Paul Jones surprised the guards at Whitehaven during the night, spiked the guns of its defenses, and prepared to burn a number of ships at anchor there. The arrival of reenforcements frustrated this plan and the American seamen were recalled to their vessels. Whitehaven never forgot, and now it has a new chapter in its martial record.

The Turks were soon to have their revenge for the loss of the *Barbarossa* through the medium of a German submarine which, after more than a year of war, accomplished one of the cherished plans of the Germans—the sinking of a British troop ship. On August 17, 1915, the *Royal Edward,* registering 11,117 tons, was hit and sunk in the Ægean Sea. There were thirty-two officers and 1,350 troops aboard, in addition to 220 officers and men of the ship's company. One thousand were lost.

The blow was a hard one, coming after the efforts of the British navy to protect the country's fighting men. It emphasized the new activity by German submarines in the Mediterranean. No one believed for a moment that Austria had ventured upon such an extensive campaign as recent events pointed to. In addition to the one German submarine known to have reached the Dardanelles via Gibraltar, it had been reported that others were being brought overland to Pola and the parts assembled there.

A good deal of mystery surrounds an engagement off the west coast of Jutland on this same August 17th. Berlin announced that a fight began at 2 o'clock in the afternoon between five German torpedo boats and a light British cruiser and eight destroyers. It was alleged that the cruiser and one destroyer foundered, without any loss to the German force.

The British Admiralty was vague in its report of the encounter, saying that the British ships were mine-sweepers, of which one failed to return. Like many other incidents of the war at sea, the real facts cannot now be established. But there is no doubt that a clash did take place, and the German report was the more circumstantial.

CHAPTER XII

THE SINKING OF THE ARABIC—BRITISH SUBMARINE SUCCESSES

WHILE the diplomats were laboring with questions arising from the loss of the *Lusitania*, at a moment when tension between the United States and Germany was acute, came the sinking of the *Arabic*, on August 19, 1915, with the death of two Americans and thirty-odd British citizens out of 391 persons aboard. The attack took place near Fastnet Light, not far distant from the spot where the *Lusitania* was sunk. Like the latter ship the *Arabic* was struck without warning, two torpedoes penetrating her side. She was a vessel of 15,801 tons and, although in service for a number of years, was rated as one of the first-class Atlantic liners. Previous to the attack she had been chased on several occasions by undersea craft, but had always managed to elude them.

The outcry that followed this event in the United States gave the situation as regarded Germany a graver aspect than before. She had been warned that this country would hold her to strict accountability for the lives of its citizens. Berlin, asked if a

submarine sank the vessel, followed by immediate disclaimers of any belligerent intent. It was alleged that a German submarine had been in the act of attacking another British vessel when the *Arabic* hove into view and attempted to ram the submarine. In defense the latter's captain sank the liner, Berlin explained.

This theory was not in the least acceptable to the United States. Captain Finch of the *Arabic* and other persons aboard had seen the attack on the second ship, and the *Arabic* attempted to flee but was overhauled and torpedoed. The facts were attested to by such a number of persons that there could be little doubt of their correctness. But despite this and Germany's oft-repeated assurances of respect for American lives, nothing of a positive character was done by the United States. Negotiations dragged out to a wearisome length and the submarines continued to take their almost daily toll from neutrals and belligerents alike.

The British submarine *E-7* was sunk by a Turkish land battery in the Sea of Marmora on September 4, 1915, thirty-two men being lost. She was the first undersea boat of the Allies to meet that fate in the Dardanelles operations.

The combination of care and luck that had kept British transports inviolate for more than a year, which ended with the sinking of the *Royal Edward,* was to be reversed during the coming months when German submarines inflicted heavy losses on this class of ships. The Mediterranean proved to be the grave of several thousand men lost in this manner. The *Ramazan,* of 3,477 tons, bringing native troops from India, was torpedoed and sunk on September 19, 1915, in the Ægean Sea. Out of about 1,000 men on board some 300 were landed at Malta. The levy which she had aboard consisted of Sikhs and Gurkhas. The sea was new to these men, drawn from interior provinces, and they had embarked upon their first voyage with all the misgivings which usually accompany that experience. The panic among them when the *Ramazan* was hit may well be imagined. Hints of it crept into the British press, but it was said that after a few wild minutes the officers got their men in hand and all died together with true British fortitude.

One of the few announcements made by Germany concerning lost submarines was given out on September 27, 1915, whether for diplomatic reasons or otherwise it would be difficult to say. The *U-27,* it was said, had not been heard from since August 10, 1915, and was deemed to have been sunk or captured. Berlin concluded with the observation that the *U-27* might have been destroyed after sinking the *Arabic,* inasmuch as none of her commanders had reported the torpedoing of the liner up to that date. It was Germany's plea at the time that she knew nothing officially of the *Arabic's* loss. The disappearance of the *U-27,* a new and fast submarine having seventeen knots speed on the surface, therefore, was a matter of diplomatic importance. The puzzle never was answered.

For some unexplained reason Great Britain never resorted to submarine attacks upon German shipping in the Baltic Sea until the fall of 1915. While her own vessels were being sunk she spared those of her enemy, either because the navy had not been prepared to undertake an expedition into the Baltic, or because it had been looked upon as a small issue in the face of graver problems. This situation was changed by the German threat against Riga, Russia's important Baltic port, following the fall of Libau and the progress of German troops in Courland within cannon range almost of Riga.

It was determined to send a squadron of submarines into the Baltic as a means of assisting Russia and for the purpose of stopping supplies being sent to Germany from Sweden. Commanders of the undersea boats were specifically directed to see that all passengers and crews were taken off merchant ships before they were sunk. These orders were carried out in detail, not a single noncombatant having lost his life as a result of the operations that ensued.

The *E-13,* with several other submarines, was bound for the Baltic when she ran aground. This was in Danish waters off the island of Saltholm, between Copenhagen and Malmö. She struck early in the morning and all efforts to gain open water failed. At five a. m. a Danish torpedo boat appeared and informed the commander that twenty-four hours would be given

him to leave the three-mile zone. Shortly afterward a German destroyer came up and remained close by until two additional Danish torpedo boats reached the scene. The German withdrew, but reappeared about nine o'clock, accompanied by a second destroyer. The three Danish boats were close at hand, but neither they nor the British crew had an inkling of what was to follow.

One of the German destroyers hoisted a signal, but this was pulled down so quickly that the *E-13's* commander failed to read it. The German then fired a torpedo at the helpless craft, which struck the bottom near by without doing any damage. This was followed with a broadside from every gun that could be brought to bear.

Realizing that escape was impossible the British commander gave orders to abandon the ship and blow her up. When such of his men as were still on their feet tumbled over the side, the Germans turned machine guns and shrapnel upon them. A dozen men were killed or wounded before a Danish boat of the trio on hand steamed into the line of fire and stopped the slaughter. Both of the German destroyers retired.

This attack inflamed England from end to end. It was pointed out how British sailormen so frequently had risked their lives to rescue Germans in distress, and demand was made for reprisals. No direct steps were taken toward that end, but the German navy soon was to suffer losses from the companion boats of the *E-13*, which had reached the Baltic safely.

Hard on the heels of the *E-13* incident came formal complaint from Germany that the British had pushed overboard survivors from a German submarine sunk by a trawler. Men aboard the transport *Narcosian* gave the first news of this affair on reaching New Orleans after a trip from England. They said that while the *U-27* was parleying with the *Narcosian*, preparatory to sinking her, an armed trawler came to their aid and rammed the *U-27*, which sunk almost at once. Several of the German sailors swam to the trawler and climbed over her sides. They were thrown back and drowned, according to the *Narcosian* crew's testimony.

Representations upon this subject were made to Washington by the German authorities, without any expectation that the

United States would take action, but merely to serve as a record and basis for future action. The German press cried for revenge, and it was not long until the Government itself talked broadly of similar treatment for British prisoners. Great Britain suggested that a board of American naval officers hear evidence in the case and render a decision, providing that Germany would defend charges of a similar character. From fighting, the two principal combatants had fallen to quarreling. Germany refused the challenge and nothing came of the matter.

A large German torpedo boat was run down and cut in two by a German ferryboat on October 15, 1915, not far from Trelleborg, Sweden. Both vessels were running with all lights out when the accident took place. Five men were saved and forty drowned.

The first fruits of the undertaking to clear the Baltic of German shipping and interfere with the operations against Riga was the sinking on October 24, 1915, of the *Prinz Adalbert,* an armored cruiser of 8,858 tons. Of 575 men aboard less than 100 were saved. She was the first big German warship to be blown up by a torpedo. True, the *Blücher* was so disposed of during the Dogger Bank fight, mentioned in another volume, but she already had been disabled.

The submarine that ended the *Prinz Adalbert's* career never was identified, but she did her work well. Berlin announced that two torpedoes struck the cruiser, both taking effect, and that she sunk in a few minutes. The attack was made near Libau, according to the German statement.

The British cruiser *Argyll* stranded off the Scottish coast on October 28, 1915, and broke up a few days later. The mishap occurred during a storm, and all of her crew were rescued by other vessels. She was of 10,850 tons burden, and carried a heavy armament. This same day the *Hythe,* an auxiliary vessel, was sunk in a collision near Gallipoli Peninsula, with a loss of twenty lives.

Turkish gunners destroyed the French submarine *Turquoise* in the Dardanelles on November 1, 1915. Her crew of thirty odd

men were killed or drowned. The incident took place at the narrowest point of the passage into the Sea of Marmora.

November proved to be a bad month for the kaiser's naval forces. During the first week the *U-8* was lost in the North Sea. Berlin reported that the vessel had stranded. Whether this version was correct cannot be learned, the British policy of concealing submarine captures, in order to befog Berlin, cutting off information from that source.

This month also cost the British several ships. Torpedo boat *No. 96* collided with another vessel near Gibraltar on November 2, 1915, and sank before all of her crew could escape, eleven men being drowned. The fifth of the month witnessed a successful attack by an enemy submarine upon the armed merchantman *Tara* of the British navy. She was a vessel of 6,322 tons and carried from four to five hundred men, of whom thirty-four lost their lives. The sinking of the *Tara*, coupled with numerous attacks on merchant ships, proved that the undersea fleet of Germany in the Mediterranean was becoming formidable. Then began a painstaking search of the many small islands off the Greek, Italian, and Turkish coasts for submarine bases. Several were discovered and destroyed. A number of submarines also were caught or sunk in the Mediterranean.

The *Undine*, a German cruiser having 2,636 tons registry, and a crew of 275 men, was torpedoed in the Baltic November 7, 1915. She had been convoying a fleet of merchant ships coming from Sweden when a British submarine cut short her days. Nearly all of the crew were lost.

Germany now began to feel the pinch of undersea warfare. Sweden, most friendly of neutral powers on the European continent, and a source of endless supplies, was almost isolated from the Baltic side by the half dozen British submarines in that sea. Unlike the British, the Germans deemed it better to keep their vessels in port than risk destruction, even in the face of conditions that approached starvation for the poor. The string of vessels that had been bringing native Swedish products to Germany, and others from the United States and elsewhere, transshipped by the Swedes, were kept idle.

Search for the submarines that imperiled their last water link with the outside world went zealously on. A number of small, fast patrol boats and cruisers were assigned to the task. Thus it was that the *Frauenlob*, a cruiser of 2,672 tons and some 300 men, came within the range of a British submarine off the Baltic coast of Sweden on November 7, 1915. She blew up and plunged to the bottom after a single torpedo had been fired. Practically every man aboard was lost.

As may be well imagined these achievements of her own undersea boats filled England with pride. It was almost a joy, except for the loss of life, to see Germany suffer at a business in which she had caused such distress to others. And the Empire was suffering acutely from the suspension of connections with Sweden, as evidenced by the greater haste to run down the elusive submarines that dogged her navy. More vessels were assigned to the hunt. Every mile of shore line within the German reach was searched for a possible base and the vessels in the hunt kept a lookout on all sides for the telltale periscope.

The British lost another destroyer on November 9, 1915, during a storm in the Mediterranean, a half dozen men being saved. And the Turks accounted for a submarine on the 13th, when the *E-20* was sunk by land fire in the Sea of Marmora. Although Turkish craft had been compelled to forego trips in those waters they proved to be most unfriendly for allied submarines. With experience on the part of the Turks came less respect for the undersea boats, a number of which were hit by land batteries during the operations there.

Naval operations continued in this way without notable incident until December 18, 1915. Then the cruiser *Bremen* joined the other German war vessels that had been sunk in the Baltic search. She registered 2,672 tons, and had about 300 men aboard. The attack took place near the Swedish coast, and created such a sensation that the Swedes became convinced the British had a submarine rendezvous on their shores, and took a hand in the hunt. No evidence of a base could be found.

By this time German shipping had practically disappeared from the Baltic and it never reappeared. The British tactics

fully served their purpose in this direction. And the few submarines rendered effective aid in the defense of Riga, helping the Russians stem what promised to be a dangerous onslaught. It would not be too much to say that the arrival of the little fleet of undersea boats was a turning point in the German drive along the Baltic, which overwhelmed Libau. The Russian line stiffened before Riga with the aid of the navy and the submarines. Riga was saved, perhaps Petrograd, which it guarded.

There was a considerable loss of life on December 28, 1915, when the *Ville de la Ciotat*, a French channel steamer, became the mark of a torpedo. Seventy-nine of her passengers and crew were drowned, the survivors suffering severely from bad weather in open boats before they reached land. A number of them afterward died of pneumonia.

The final tragedy of the year at sea took place on December 30, 1915, shortly after one o'clock in the afternoon at a point 300 miles northwest of Alexandria, Egypt, where the Peninsular and Oriental liner *Persia* was torpedoed. Like so many ships that had gone before she sank immediately. Out of 241 passengers aboard only fifty-nine were saved, while ninety-four men in a crew of 159 reached shore. This aroused some criticism, but there was no evidence to show that the crew had taken advantage of those intrusted to their protection.

No one saw the submarine that sank the *Persia*. She undoubtedly was torpedoed, as it was scarcely reasonable that a stray mine had floated to such an unfrequented spot. One American citizen, Robert Ney McNeely, appointed consul to Aden, Egypt, lost his life. He was en route to his post at the time and the United States Government found itself facing another serious situation. Here was an American official, bound on official business, killed by a friendly nation. There the problem became more complex. It could not be proved to whom the submarine belonged that attacked the ship; it could not even be shown that she had been torpedoed. Germany flatly denied any hand in the affair and Austria, after delay for reports from her submarines commanders, likewise disclaimed responsibility. Official Washington turned inquiring eyes upon Turkey. There were hints in

the German press that a Turkish boat torpedoed the vessel. Both Germany and Austria had pledged themselves to respect the lives of noncombatants, but Turkey, having never sank a passenger ship, was bound by no such pledge. It even was hinted that Bulgaria might be the nation to blame. She had entered hostilities on the side of the Teutonic Powers, and was said to have at least one or two submarines.

Amid this welter of excuses, explanations and possibilities the United States Government floundered for several weeks. Then it gave up the problem and ruled that Mr. McNeely should have asked for a warship if he wanted to reach Aden and there was no other way to go. The *Persia* had several 4.7-inch guns aboard, which compromised her in the view of Washington.

According to the British Admiralty thirty-nine unarmed steamships and one trawler flying the Union Jack were sunk without warning by submarines up to the end of 1915. Thirteen neutral steamships and one sailing vessel were listed under the same heading. Of these, the *Gulflight* and *Nebraskan* were American. The Norwegians lost four steamships and the sailing craft, the Swedes four, the Danes one, the Greeks one, and the Portuguese one. It was stated that several vessels believed to have been sunk by submarines, where proof was lacking, had not been taken into account.

Although this compilation included the *Lusitania*, the *Arabic*, and other big vessels on which many lives were lost, the list seems of small consequence in view of later raids upon allied and neutral shipping by the German undersea boats. It was destined to reach an ominous length in the succeeding months.

CHAPTER XIII

CRUISE OF THE MOEWE—LOSS OF BRITISH BATTLESHIPS

THE cruise of the *Moewe* stands out as one of the heroic, almost Homeric achievements of the war. She left Bremerhaven on December 20, 1915, according to one of her officers who afterward reached the United States, and calmly threaded her way through the meshes of the British navy's North Sea net. After leaving the shelter of home waters, with the Swedish colors painted on her hull, the *Moewe* boldly turned her nose down the Channel. She answered the signals of several British cruisers and on one occasion at least was saluted in turn. Having a powerful wireless apparatus aboard, her commander, Count zu Dohna-Schlobitten, a captain-lieutenant in the Imperial navy, was able to keep up with the movements of British patrol vessels. Several intercepted messages told of a strange white liner that refused to answer questions. This was the *Moewe*, and before passing into the Atlantic she had changed her coat to black. She was sighted by probably a dozen British warships before reaching the North Atlantic. By refusing to heed the signals of distant vessels, which she had a good chance of outdistancing in a race, and showing every courtesy to those close at hand, the raider made her escape.

The *Moewe* had about three hundred men aboard. They were a picked crew, and her commander a man of daring. Within a period of less than three months he sunk fifteen merchant ships, captured the *Appam* and sent her to Norfolk, Va., then returned home with 199 prisoners and $250,000 in gold bars. And he may have been responsible for the loss of the British battleship *King Edward VII*, of 16,500 tons, which struck a mine in the North Sea on January 9, 1916. It is certain that the *Moewe* left a chain of mines behind her on the outward voyage, some of which undoubtedly caused loss to allied shipping.

Once past the British Channel fleet, the *Moewe* struck for the steamship lane off the Moroccan, Spanish, and Portuguese coasts. There she was comparatively safe from pursuit, and so skillfully were her operations carried on that it was many weeks before the fact became known that a raider actually was abroad. But one by one overdue steamships failed to reach their ports and suspicion grew. Either the *Karlsruhe* had returned to life as a plague upon allied shipping, an able successor appeared, or a flotilla of giant submarines was at large that could cruise almost any distance. Several vessels brought tales to England of being chased by a phantom ship near the African coast. But such stories had been repeated so many times without any foundation that the British admiralty was in a quandary. To overlook no clue, a flotilla of cruisers swept the seas under suspicion. They came back empty handed.

At dawn, February 1, 1916, a big steamship passed into Hampton Roads, disregarding pilots and the signals of other craft. She hove to at an isolated spot and waited for daylight. When the skies cleared the German naval flag was seen floating at her prow. Newport News could scarce believe the report. Then the city remembered the *Kronprinzessin Cecile* and the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse,* both of which had stolen in under cover of night from a raiding career.

But this was no raider. It was the *Appam,* a raider's victim. She had sailed across the Atlantic from a point on the South African route, held prisoner thirty-three days by a prize crew of twenty-two men and one officer, Lieutenant Hans Berg, of the Imperial German Naval Reserve. Aboard the *Appam* were 156 officers and men, 116 of her own passengers, 138 survivors of destroyed vessels, and twenty Germans who had been en route to a prison camp in England when rescued. This large company was cowed by the lieutenant's threat to shoot the first man who made a hostile move, or to blow up the vessel with bombs if he saw defeat was certain. And, like a good stage director, he pointed significantly to rifles, bayonets, and bombs.

There were several notables among the prisoners, including Sir Edward Merewether, Governor of Sierra Leone, and his wife.

FIERCE ATTACK

ON THE

FRENCH FORTRESS OF VERDUN

ALSO

VIEWS FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE WESTERN FRONT AND FROM THE BATTLE LINES IN GALICIA AND THE CARPATHIANS

A French gunner watching the flight of the shell just discharged from his gun, which he has named L'Heroique. The gun is just on the recoil

Copyright Paul Thompson

The arrival of the German field post and the distribution of mail sacks is enthusiastically welcomed by the men. It would seem that the soldiers at the front are well remembered by their friends at home

Copyright, Press Illustrating Co

German horsemen just emerging from the cover of a wood in the Argonne. In general, cavalry have not played as important a part on the western front as on the Austro-Russian lines

Copyright, Underwood & Underwood

Transporting artillery by ox teams in the Carpathian Mountains. On the rough roads of the eastern fronts oxen often prove the best available means of moving supplies

Copyright, Paul Thompson

A ruined cottage near Lemberg, Galicia, in which German soldiers have taken their position, ready to defend themselves if discovered by the enemy

Copyright, Underwood & Underwood

German bridge builders constructing a long pontoon bridge across the Weichsel, over which their army afterward passed

The dead and wounded are everywhere. The defenders of this position—an abandoned quarry occupied by German troops in the advance on Verdun—are left with their useless weapons where they fell

Copyright, Medem Photo Service

General Joffre conferring with General Pétain near Verdun, where General Pétain's forces meet the assaults of the armies of the Crown Prince in the battle for the fortress

They were homeward bound from his African post for a vacation when the *Moewe* took the *Appam*. All of the persons aboard, save the Germans, were released and the ship interned. Then followed a long wrangle as to the status of the vessel, Germany claiming the right of asylum for a prize by the terms of an old Prussian treaty with the United States. Great Britain protested this claim and demanded that the ship be released. Without actually affirming one or denying the other, the United States allowed the *Appam* to remain in German hands, enjoying the same privileges as other interned ships.

The *Appam* was a rich prize indeed. Having a registry of 7,781 tons, she was a modern vessel throughout, having been employed for several years in the trade between South Africa and England. She was worth $1,000,000 stripped, while her cargo sold for $700,000. The $250,000 in gold bars which subsequently went into the Berlin strong box also came from the *Appam*—a round $2,000,000. Altogether it was a very good day's work for the *Moewe*.

Not till the *Appam* arrived in the Virginia harbor was it positively known that a raider had eluded the allied navies. The search that followed was conducted on a broader scale and with more minute care than any similar hunt of the war, but to no avail. On February 20, 1916, the *Westburn*, a British vessel of 3,300 tons, put into Santa Cruz de Teneriffe, a Spanish port. She, too, had a German captor aboard. One officer and six men brought in 206 prisoners from one Belgian and six British ships. Having landed all of those on board the German lieutenant in command asked for permission to anchor at a different point, and, this being granted, steamed beyond the three-mile limit, where the *Westburn* was blown up. Long use of sea water in her boilers caused the explosion, her commander said. He was arrested along with his half dozen men, then paroled. It was the fortune of war. Once more the Germans had won, the British lost.

Again word was passed that the *Moewe* must be found. The British public took her feats much to heart. They rivaled the finest accomplishments of British sailormen in the days when

privateers went forth to destroy French commerce. But the *Moewe* never was caught. On the morning of March 5, 1916, she put into Wilhelmshaven with 4 officers, 29 marines and sailors, and 165 men of enemy crews as her prisoners. And the gold bars were secure in the captain's safe.

Immediately a fervor of enthusiasm ran through Germany. The *Moewe* was back after a trip of many thousand miles, with prisoners and bullion aboard. She had sunk fifteen allied vessels—thirteen British, one Belgian, and one French—with an aggregate tonnage of nearly 60,000. This had been accomplished in the face of her enemies' combined sea power. The *Moewe* first sailed through the blockade and then came home again by the long way round. She skirted the whole of Iceland to reach Wilhelmshaven safely, making a perilous voyage into Arctic waters at the worst season of the year. All this and more the German papers recounted with pardonable pride. It was said that Germany had flung the gauntlet in the British face and escaped unscathed.

Count zu Dohna-Schlobitten had the honor paid him of a visit from the kaiser aboard his ship, where he received the Iron Cross. Wilhelm was much pleased, as may be imagined, and the example of the count was held up to the German navy as an illustration of what daring could achieve.

The *Moewe's* exploits evidently were part of a concerted plan. Whether the raider actually sunk all of the vessels accredited to her is a question that probably never will be answered. The evidence tends to show that it was Germany's aim to create a fleet of auxiliaries in the mid-Atlantic. It seems likely that the naval board in Berlin conceived the idea of having a number of their interned vessels break for the sea on a stated day and meet at a common rendezvous, or undertake raiding upon their own account.

Whatever the plan, it was carried out in part. Two German liners escaped from South American ports on February 12, 1916, and never were heard from again, so far as the records go. They were the *Bahrenfeld* and the *Turpin*. As the identity of the *Moewe* already had been established and allied warships were scouring the seven seas for her, it appears plausible that the

Bahrenfeld and *Turpin* both assumed the same title, and that one or other of the vessels was taken to be the original *Moewe* by persons on ships which they sunk. Or one or both may have been run down and the fact kept secret.

The *Bahrenfeld* and *Turpin* commanders were wily men. They told the authorities at Buenos Aires, where the first named had sought asylum, and Puenta Arenas, Chile, where the second was interned, that the machinery of their ships was suffering from disuse, and requested permission for a day's run in the neighboring waters that the engines might have exercise. This was granted, and they quietly put to sea. That was the last seen of them by the South American folk. But the port officials at Rio de Janeiro were suspicious when the *Asuncion* tried the same ruse. As she began to edge beyond bounds a shot across her bow cut short the plan.

Both the *Bahrenfeld* and the *Turpin* were built in England, the former having a registry of 2,357 tons, and the latter 3,301 tons.

The first day of the new year was marked by the explosion of the British armored cruiser *Natal* in an east-coast port. Three hundred men of a crew numbering 700 were killed, the others escaping because they had shore leave. Not a man on board lived to tell how the explosion came. It was one of a mysterious chain that had shaken even British nerves in the early days of the war when a half dozen warcraft were blown up in home ports. The explosions were, in every instance, extremely violent, literally blowing the vessels to bits. Several of them were affirmed to have been accidental by the British admiralty, which rendered that verdict upon the *Natal,* but these official explanations never were convincing.

The *Natal,* a vessel of 3,600 tons, had but recently returned from sea service and was in good condition throughout. The explosion that rent her apart came in the quiet of the evening when the men either were sleeping or preparing for supper. Suddenly there was a crash, and the *Natal* was no more. Such of her hull and superstructure as had not been scattered in every direction sank beneath the surface of the water.

Just nine days later the *King Edward VII*, a predreadnought of 16,500 tons, collided with a mine in the North Sea and soon foundered. She was a second-line ship of heavy battery and carried a crew of 777 men, all of whom were taken off before the big craft sunk. This was one of the few instances in which there was no loss of life from mine or torpedo explosions. The accident occurred at a time when the *King Edward VII* was accompanied by a number of other vessels, or most of the men aboard probably would have been drowned. On a warship, even more than a passenger vessel, it is impossible to carry enough boats for all. The price of defeat in a naval action inevitably is death. For this reason there was general thanksgiving in England that the crew of the battleship had been saved, even though the ship was lost.

During the month of January, 1916, three British sailing vessels and ten steamships were sunk by enemy warships, with a respective tonnage of 153 and 31,481. Four hundred and ten lives were lost. Three steamships struck mines and foundered in the same month, having a tonnage of 3,357. Two persons died in the trio of accidents.

The *Amiral Charner*, an old but serviceable French armored cruiser of 4,680 tons, was torpedoed in the Mediterranean near Syria on February 8, 1916. She went down within a few minutes, although about a hundred men managed to reach the lifeboats and rafts. The weather was bitterly cold, and only one survivor lived to bring the news. He was picked up on a raft with fourteen dead companions and told an incoherent story that bore little relation to the truth. But it was only too easy to guess what had happened.

During the early period of the war the French navy escaped the heavy blows that fell upon the British, partly because Germany concentrated on her larger antagonist's navy, and partly due to the fact that the British ships were nearly all engaged in the Atlantic, while the French confined themselves more especially to the Mediterranean. With the opening of operations at the Dardanelles and the coming of German submarines the losses of the French sea forces began to grow rapidly. But they held the Mediterranean against all attacks.

The *Arethusa*, which torpedoed the *Blücher* after she had been put out of action by the *Lion* in that famous fight, collided with a mine near the east coast of England on February 14, 1916. She went down with a loss of ten men, neighboring vessels doing notable rescue work. The *Arethusa* was a cruiser of 3,600 tons and had taken an active part in all of the work that fell to the British fleet. She was one of the pet ships of the navy, having a reputation for speed and luck that made her name familiar to readers the world over. A half dozen brushes with the enemy had found her well up in the fighting line, and she was said by sailormen to have a charmed existence, never having been hit. But she sunk quickly after striking the mine. The passing of so gallant a ship was one of the chief developments of the month in its naval history.

The Peninsular and Oriental liner *Maloja* was blown up in the Channel on February 28, 1916, supposedly by a mine. The loss of life was large, 147 persons being drowned.

CHAPTER XIV

CONTINUATION OF WAR ON MERCHANT SHIPPING—ITALIAN AND RUSSIAN NAVAL MOVEMENTS—SINKING OF LA PROVENCE

THROUGHOUT the months of January and February, 1916 while negotiations between Germany and the United States were in a critical stage, the submarine war on merchant shipping continued with little abatement. Seeing that her armies could thwart the Allies' offensive efforts, but were unable to crush any one of the larger powers, Germany turned longing eyes to the sea. There was much talk of risking a major engagement. The kaiser's naval advisers worked feverishly with figures and plans. An echo of this scarce suppressed excitement crept into the German press, and was duly noted in London and Paris.

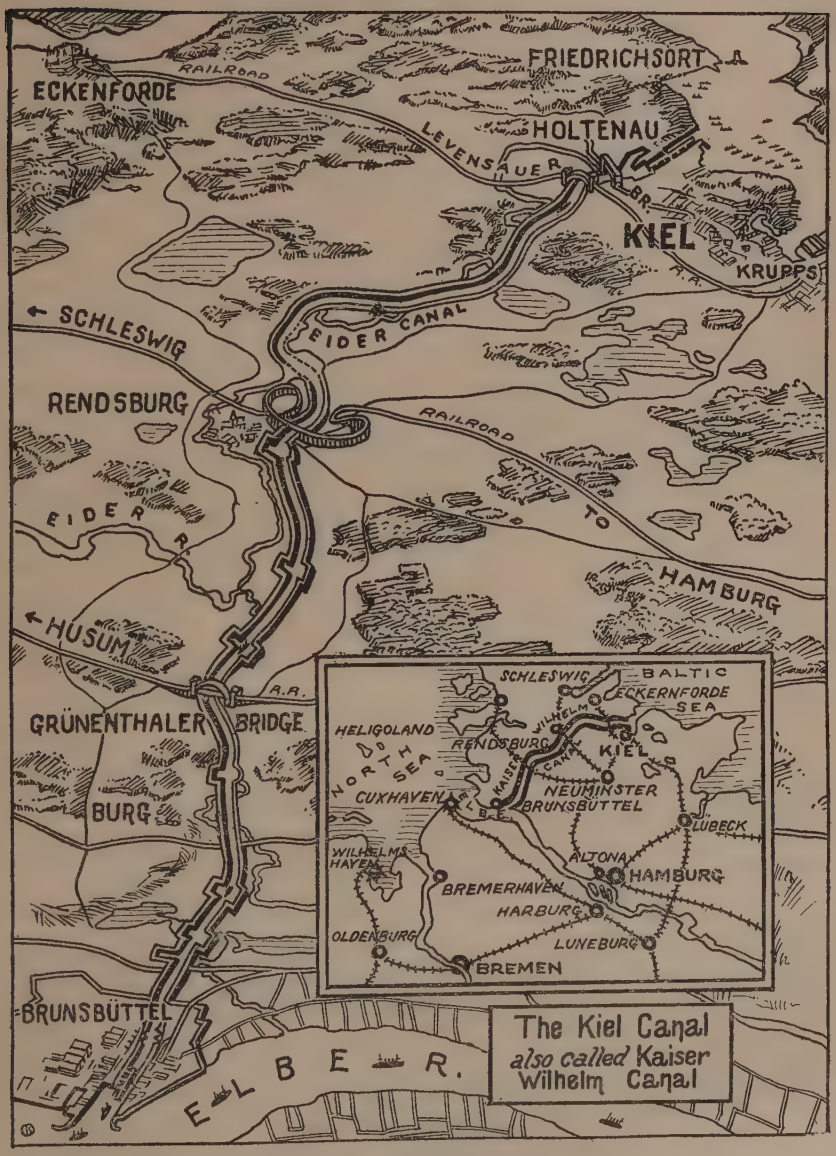
One of the principal German journals came out with a frank discussion of the elements involved and the chances of success. It was said that three possibilities lay open. The first contemplated an attack upon the Allies' flank in Flanders, made from the sea, to coordinate with a drive on land. Another section of the fleet would try to hold off the British until the action was over or, failing that, combine forces with the first squadron and stake the Empire s fortune on the result of a general battle.

The second plan provided for a dash to sea with the purpose of running the blockade and effecting a junction with the Austrians in the Mediterranean, to be followed by an attack upon the Suez Canal. A land attack was to take place at the same time. The third scheme called for minor raids on exposed points by the two fleets and relentless submarine activities.

This estimate was not far short of the actual plans before the German naval authorities. Their realization of the pressing need for action, the tightening blockade, and the desperate possibilities of defeat, made them a trifle unwary. News was flashed abroad many times that revealed this state of mind. For instance, on February 20, 1916, it was announced that cooperative action at sea had been settled upon in accord with the proposals of Archduke Charles Stephen and Prince Henry of Prussia, the kaiser's brother. Such information, whether genuine or not, could only make the Allies redouble their watch.

Early in February, 1916, it was established that 70,000 naval reservists had been gathered at Kiel and Helgoland ready for duty on auxiliary vessels and cruisers of newly-formed squadrons. Many facts that pointed to Germany's resolution in the face of odds never reached America. The Ally censors kept Germany's secret well. But the whole world expected that a big engagement would be fought any day. The intervening hours, almost the minutes, might be counted.

Then Germany changed her mind. She gave notice that after March 1, 1916, a new submarine campaign would be launched. Certain concessions were granted to the demands of the United States, but it was proposed to consider many vessels as warcraft that other nations regarded as merchant ships. It was agreed


FRIEDRICHSORT
RAILROAD
ECKENFORDE
LEVENSAUER
HOLTENAU
BR.
KIEL
A.A.
KRUPPS
SCHLESWIG
EIDER CANAL
RENDSBURG
RAILROAD
TO
HAMBURG
EIDER R.
HUSUM
A.A.
GRÜNENTHALER
BRIDGE
BURG
BRUNSBÜTTEL
ELBE R.
SCHLESWIG
BALTIC
ECKERNFORDE
SEA
HELIGOLAND
NORTH SEA
RENDSBURG
WILHELM
KIEL
KAISER
CANAL
CUXHAVEN
NEUMINSTER
BRUNSBÜTTEL
LUBECK
WILHELMS
HAVEN
ALTONA
HAMBURG
BREMERHAVEN
HARBURG
OLDENBURG
LUNEBURG
BREMEN
The Kiel Canal
also called Kaiser
Wilhelm Canal

KIEL CANAL

that warning should be given passenger vessels unless they made an offensive move. This broad ruling gave Germany a free hand, at least from her own standpoint.

The new campaign was widely advertised, a succession of brusque threats and veiled insinuations leading up to a fine climax of publicity. The tactics were those of diplomacy and the drama, with the world for an audience.

But the campaign failed to accomplish what had been claimed for it. The number of vessels lost did not materially increase, nor did allied shipping halt. No matter what efforts Germany has made the ports of her enemies never have closed—have in reality been far busier than before the war. And the British navy's nets and traps, and her thousands of patrol boats made the submarine commanders' task ever more difficult. Within a few weeks after the latest German policy was in effect the Allies could again breathe easy. Casualties at sea continued, but there was no general destruction as had been promised.

The principal achievement of Italy's navy in the war has been the protection of her coast line. Indisputably she has dominated the Adriatic, bottling up the Austrian fleet at Pola. Not a single engagement, worthy the name, has been fought in that narrow strip of water, only forty-five miles wide at its southern extremity, ninety at the northern end and 110 at the widest point. Across this limited space Italy has transported about 200,000 troops, with the loss of but two transports, the *Mari Chiaro* and the *Umberto,* both of which were small. A good part of the Serbian and Montenegrin armies were carried to places where they might recuperate, and a considerable force of her own troops landed on the coast of Albania. This was accomplished in defiance of Austria's numerous submarines, which never have achieved anything like the success of the German undersea craft.

After Italy's entrance into the war Austrian squadrons of light cruisers and destroyers shelled several coast cities. But these attacks soon ceased and all of the 500 miles of Italy's Adriatic shore, dented as it is with small harbors and flanked by many islands, has been strangely immune from enemy depredations. This is a tribute to the Italian navy that cannot be easily

explained. The Italian censorship, stricter than that of any other belligerent power, has let through almost nothing about her naval activities. The Austrians simply have refused to fight, preferring to keep their warcraft safe in the harbor at Pola rather than risk the fortune of battle.

During the period under review in this volume the Italians lay and waited for their foe as they had done for weary months. Nothing happened. A few merchant ships, sailing vessels for the most part, were torpedoed, but there was no attempt by the Austrians to sink enemy warships. Italy kept up her vigil and the Austrians dozed in their strong harbor at Pola.

When Bulgaria cast her lot with Germany the Russian Black Sea fleet shelled Dedeagatch and other Bulgarian coast cities, damaging fortifications, destroying shipping in the harbors and causing a few casualties among troops and citizens. These demonstrations were taken to herald a landing of soldiers on the Bulgar coast, but this expected event never developed. Russia, having abundant troubles in other quarters, has been in no position to undertake an invasion of her newest foe's territory.

While allied vessels were pounding the forts at the Dardanelles it was reported several times that the Russians would cooperate in a grand assault, endeavoring to reduce the Black Sea defenses of the Ottoman capital. The fortifications there were shelled a few times and various cities on the Asiatic shore of the Turks have been bombarded. But all of this work was desultory, having no special purpose and accomplishing little. Turkish shipping was driven from the Black Sea in the early days of the war, although a few transports and supply vessels have made the hazardous trip to Trebizond and other Turkish ports. The Russian fleet has taken heavy toll among such craft and to all purposes pinned the Turk to his side of the sea, while enjoying all of its privileges.

The successful operations of the Russian Caucasian army in the first months of 1916 and the movement down the Black Sea coast was aided by the fleet, which brought supplies across the sea to newly won points and prepared the way for an attack upon Trebizond. That city is of considerable importance, being a mili-

tary base and having a number of industries. It was a busy port before the war began and would be a valuable rallying point for future operations against Constantinople. All signs indicated a Russian offensive with Trebizond as its immediate objective. The harbor's fortifications already had been damaged by the Russian fire, and the fleet undoubtedly could cooperate in any attack upon the city.

The Turkish navy, like the Austrian, kept to home waters. Scarcely a month passed that engagements were not reported between the *Goeben* and *Breslau* with vessels of the enemy. Many of these were circumstantial, one of which recounted a long range fight between the *Goeben* and Russian warships, in which the *Goeben* was said to have been severely damaged. According to subsequent reports a great hole in her hull was patched with cement, armor plate being unavailable in Constantinople.

Losses inflicted upon British shipping up to the end of February, 1916, were slightly under 4 per cent of the vessels flying the British flag, and a shade more than 6 per cent in point of tonnage. The loss of the other Allies, on a basis of tonnage, was as follows: France, 7 per cent; Russia, 5 per cent; and Italy, 4½ per cent.

How heavy the hand of war has fallen upon neutrals may be judged from a comparison of sea casualties. Italy lost twenty-one steamers with a gross tonnage of 70,000 in the period before the reader, while Norway, a neutral, lost fifty steamers having an aggregate tonnage of 96,000, more than 25 per cent larger. Total allied shipping losses numbered 481 steamships having a tonnage of 1,621,000, and fifty-seven sailing vessels, with a tonnage of 47,000. One hundred and forty-six neutral craft were sunk, whose tonnage reached 293,375, while sailing vessels to the number of forty-two, with a tonnage of 24,001, were lost. Germany's methods cost innocent bystanders among the nations almost one-fifth of the damage done to her foes' commercial fleets.

Inclusive of trawlers, 980 merchant craft had been sunk by the end of February, of which 726 were vessels of good size. It was destruction upon a scale never seen before, an economic pressure that made former wars seem mere tournaments. And Germany's

most desperate attempts failed to accomplish her end—the halting of allied commerce. Although it was mathematically certain that a percentage of the ships sailing every day would be torpedoed, the world's trade went on in the usual channels.

There was a brighter side to the situation. "After more than a year of war," says a British admiralty statement, "the steam shipping of Great Britain increased eighty-eight vessels and 344,000 tons. France at the end of 1915 was only short nine steamers and 12,500 tons of the previous year's total. Italy and Russia both show an increase in tonnage.

"It is therefore clear that the shortage of tonnage is due not to the action of submarines, but to the great requirements of the military and naval forces. The latest published statement of these show that they are demanding 3,100 vessels."

Another turn was given to the controversy over sea laws during the first quarter of 1916 by the arming of many British and a considerable proportion of Italian passenger vessels. Earlier in the war a few British ships came into New York harbor with guns aboard, but they were forced to abandon the plan because of American protests. The second attempt was different and so were the circumstances. Germany had shown a disregard for the helplessness of passenger craft that did not permit of forcible objection to the adoption of defensive methods by such vessels. The Italians, in particular, displayed a resolute spirit. Diplomatic hints had no weight at Rome and one after another the Italian liners came into New York with trim three-inch pieces fore and aft. They had a most suggestive look and were manned by crews trained in the navy. Not since the days of open piracy had armed merchant ships been seen in American waters. Their presence recalled the time when every ship that sailed was prepared to fight or run as necessity might dictate.

Germany flatly refused to consider merchantmen with guns aboard as anything but warships, and gave notice that she would sink them without warning. Once more the relations of Germany and the United States reached a point that bordered on an open break. Although this never quite happened, the United States temporizing and the kaiser's agents granting just enough

to prevent a rupture, the situation was exceedingly delicate. American contentions ultimately were met by the promise that armed craft would not be attacked unless they made an offensive move. This left things as they had been before. There was no world court to decide what an offensive move meant, nor to enforce a decision.

The White Star line announced in the closing week of February, 1916, that passenger service between the United States and England would be discontinued until further notice. This meant that all of the company's ships had been requisitioned for the carrying of munitions. It betokened a more intensive preparation for the prosecution of the war by England and her Allies. It also pointed to the swelling tide of supplies flowing from America.

France was to sustain the supreme affliction of the war at sea on February 26, 1916. *La Provence* was sunk that day. She had sailed from Marseilles with 3,500 soldiers and a crew of 500 men, bound for Saloniki. A torpedo sent her to the bottom, along with 3,300 of those on board, representing the greatest tragedy of the sea in history. The attack took place in the Mediterranean and the big liner plunged beneath the waves in less than fifteen minutes after she had been struck.

Few vessels enjoyed such fame as the *La Provence*. Built in 1905, she broke the transatlantic record on her first trip across, defeating the new *Deutschland* of the Hamburg-American line in a spectacular dash that brought her from Havre to New York hours ahead of the best previous record. With a registry of 19,000 tons and engines generating 30,000 horsepower she was a ship of exceptional grace. Not until the *Lusitania* came into service did the *La Provence* surrender her distinction of being the fastest vessel afloat, and strangely enough both she and the *Lusitania* were to fall victims of German submarines.

When the torpedo that cost so many lives exploded within the hull of the *La Provence*, killing a good part of the engine-room crew, it was seen that only a few of her large company could escape. Lifeboats, rafts, and the makeshift straws to safety that could be seized upon in emergency accommodated a

bare 700 and odd men. The troops gathered on the upper decks and sang the "Marseillaise" as the great hull settled in the water. Officers embraced their men, some indulged in a last whiff of tobacco, others prayed for the folks at home. Commandant Vesco stood on the bridge and directed the launching of the few boats that got away. Then, as the vessel came even with the waves, he tossed his cap overboard and cried: "Adieu, my boys." As one man they answered:

"Vive la France."

PART III—THE WAR ON THE EASTERN FRONT

CHAPTER XV

SUMMARY OF FIRST YEAR'S OPERATIONS

AFTER the last days of that fateful July, 1914, had passed, bringing mobilization in Austria-Hungary, Serbia, and Russia, and the outbreak of war between the former two countries, the dance of death was on. On August 1, 1914, Germany ordered the general mobilization of its armies, and on the same day declared war against Russia. Within a few days the first Russian advance into East Prussia began under the leadership of Grand Duke Nicholas, who, by a special order of the czar, had been made commander in chief of all Russian forces on August 3, 1914. Germany, fully occupied with its advance into Belgium and France, offered hardly any resistance, and its forces, consisting almost exclusively of the few army corps permanently stationed along its eastern border and reenforced only by local reserves, advanced only in a few places, and there only for short distances, into Russian territory.

On August 5, 1914, Austria-Hungary, too, declared war against Russia, and the next day brought immediately engagements along the frontier of the two countries, which, however, did not develop seriously for some time. The Russian advance into East Prussia had reached Marggrabova by the 15th, and from then on proceeded fairly rapidly during the following week. Memel, Tilsit, Insterburg, Königsberg, and Allenstein—to name only a few of the more important cities of East Prussia—were either threatened with occupation by the Russian forces or had

actually been occupied by them. The entire Mazurian Lake district in the southeast of the Prusso-Russian border region was overrun with Russian troops. But about August 22, 1914, Germany awoke to the danger of the Russian invasion. General von Hindenburg was put in command in the east, and in the battle of Tannenberg, which lasted from August 22 to 27, 1914, inflicted a disastrous defeat on the Russian armies, capturing tens of thousands of its soldiers and driving as many more to their deaths in the swamp lands of the Mazurian Lakes. Not only did this end for the time the Russian invasion of Germany, but the latter country's armies followed the retreating enemy a considerable distance into his own territory.

But although such important points as Lodz and Radomsk were occupied during the last days of August and the first days of September, the German advance into South Poland quickly collapsed. In the meantime the Russians had successfully invaded Galicia, and by September 3, 1914, the Austro-Hungarians evacuated Lemberg. In the north, too, the Russian forces had resumed the offensive and once more were invading East Prussia. But they were again beaten back by Von Hindenburg on September 10-11, 1914, and, four days later, on September 15, 1914, suffered another serious defeat in the Mazurian Lakes. The Galician invasion, however, was meeting with great success. By September 16, 1914, the important Austrian fortress of Przemysl—sixty miles west of Lemberg—had been reached and its siege begun. By September 26, 1914, the Russians had reached the Carpathian Mountains and were flooding the fertile plains of the Bukowina, threatening an imminent invasion of Hungary itself.

The first week of October, 1914, brought a third invasion of East Prussia which, however, did not extend as far as the two preceding it, and which was partly repulsed before October was ended. In the meantime Austria had called upon Germany for immediate help in Galicia, and by October 2, 1914, strong German-Austrian forces had entered Poland in order to reduce the Russian pressure on Galicia, reaching the Upper Vistula on October 11, 1914, and advancing against Poland's capital, War-

saw. On the same day the siege of Przemysl was lifted, after a Russian attempt to take it by storm had been successfully beaten off a few days earlier. Throughout the balance of October, 1914, the heaviest kind of fighting took place in Galicia and the Bukowina. In the latter district the Austro-Hungarian troops were successful, and on October 22, 1914, reoccupied Czernovitz in the northeastern part of the province.

By November 7, 1914, the Russians were back again in East Prussia, but encountered determined resistance and suffered a series of defeats. However, although they were repulsed in many places, they succeeded in retaining a foothold in many others. At the same time very strong Russian forces had advanced from Novo Georgievsk across the Vistula toward the Prussian provinces of Posen and Silesia. In the face of these the Austro-Hungarian-German forces immediately gave up their attempted advance against Warsaw and retreated beyond their own borders into Upper Silesia and West Galicia. By the middle of November an extensive Russian offensive was under way along the entire front. Nowhere, however, did it meet with anything but passing success. In East Prussia and in North Poland the Germans won battle after battle and steadily advanced against Lodz. About November 22, 1914, it looked as if the tide was going to turn in favor of the Russian arms. One German army group seemed completely surrounded to the northeast of Lodz. But, although losing a large part of its effectiveness, it managed to break through the Russian ring and to connect again with the other German forces by November 26, 1914. At the same time heavy fighting occurred around Cracow and in the Bukowina where the Russians again occupied Czernovitz on November 27, 1914.

Lodz fell on December 6, 1914. On the 7th the Russians were again repulsed in the Mazurian Lakes region. Throughout that month and January, 1915, very severe fighting took place in the Carpathian Mountains, and by the end of January, 1915, the Austro-Hungarian forces were in possession of all the passes, but had not been able to drive the Russians from the north side of the mountains. In the meanwhile the Russians were pressing

their attacks against East Prussia with renewed vigor and greatly augmented forces, and by February 7, 1915, had again advanced to the Mazurian Lakes. In a battle lasting nine days, Von Hindenburg once more defeated the Russian army and drove it back into North Poland, inflicting very heavy losses. At the end of another week, February 24, 1915, the Russians had been driven out of the Bukowina.

Von Hindenburg had followed up his new success at the Mazurian Lakes with a drive into North Poland, undoubtedly with the object of invading Courland. Hardly had it gotten under way when the Galician fortress of Przemysl was forced to surrender on March 22, 1915. This not only gained for the Russians a large booty in prisoners, munitions, and equipment, but also released the great army that had been besieging the fortress. It was thrown immediately against the Austro-Hungarian forces in Galicia, who were driven back again rapidly into the Carpathian Mountains. Again Austria appealed to Germany for help. General von Mackensen was sent to the rescue with an army made up largely from troops taken from Von Hindenburg's forces. Thereby the latter again was forced to stop further operations in the north. Von Mackensen's combined Austro-Hungarian-German armies had an immense supply of guns and munitions, both of which were beginning to run short in the Russian army. With these they blasted away Russian line after line, driving the Russians finally almost completely out of Galicia, after retaking Przemysl on June 3, 1915, and Lemberg on June 24, 1915.

In the north, in the meantime, the Germans had received reenforcements filling the gap that Von Mackensen's Galician operations had caused. With these they invaded Courland while other forces landed on the Gulf of Riga. With these two groups they pushed south and soon connected with Von Hindenburg's army before Novo Georgievsk and Warsaw. The latter had been there practically ever since early in January, 1915, when after the fall of Lodz it had gradually advanced against Poland's capital, but was held within seven miles of it along the Bzura and Rawka Rivers, where many bloody engagements were fought.

At the same time that these two groups formed a junction Von Mackensen came up with his forces from the south, taking Zamost and Lublin and investing Ivangorod. Immediately the drive for Warsaw began from all sides. Pultusk, on the Nareff, fell on July 25, 1915, and on July 30, 1915, the Russians began the evacuation of Warsaw and retreated toward a very strongly fortified line that had been prepared and ran from Kovno south through Grodno and Brest-Litovsk.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FALL OF THE NIEMEN AND NAREFF FORTRESSES

THE 5th of August, 1915, was a fateful day for the Russian armies. The fall of Warsaw, on that date, was confirmed by the occupation of Poland's ancient capital by German forces under the command of Prince Leopold of Bavaria, brother of King Ludwig III of Bavaria and son-in-law of Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria-Hungary. This in itself would have been a severe setback to the Russian arms. But the consequences which this event was bound to have were of even greater importance.

In an earlier part of this work we heard at some length of the arrangement of Russia's girdle of fortresses which—to repeat only the most important—stretched from Kovno in the north through Oliha, Grodno, Ossovetz, Lomza, Osholenka, and Novo Georgievsk to powerful Warsaw and from there to the south and east to Ivangorod and Brest-Litovsk. These permanent fortifications were supported by strong natural barriers or obstacles in the form of rivers. The Niemen, Bobr, Nareff, Vistula and Bug, with their interminable windings, made more difficult to cross in some places by extensive swamp lands, had, together with the fortified places, offered ideal means for strong defense. Again and again, throughout the first thirteen months of the war, German and Austrian troops had driven the Russian

forces back to these defensive lines—but no farther. Behind this shelter the Russians were able to recuperate from the severest reverses and, thanks to a very extensive and comparatively scientific network of railways, reserves and reenforcements could be brought up from interior points until armies which apparently had been beaten to a standstill emerged again, stronger than ever in number and equipment, to undertake a new offensive against the German masses.

Just previous to the fall of Warsaw the eastern front, roughly speaking, was formed by the two sides of an equilateral triangle, with the northern side starting from a point on the Gulf of Riga, about forty miles northwest of Riga, and with the southern side starting from Chotin on the River Dniester in Russian Bessarabia, very close to the point where that Russian province touches Rumania and Galicia. The apex was at Warsaw. When this apex caved in with the withdrawal of the Russians, it followed logically that something had to happen to the two lines that met there. That the Russians retreated from Warsaw on account of some insurmountable difficulties which made the further holding of this most important center impossible, is quite clear. It has been established by now, almost beyond all doubt, that this step became necessary because of insufficient munitions. But whether this is so or not, it still remained true that whatever caused their retreat from Warsaw would exert a similar influence on their capacity to hold their second line of permanent fortifications. And events immediately following the fall of Warsaw proved this contention. Backward and backward fell the Russian lines during the following weeks until by the end of October, 1915, the two sides of the erstwhile triangle had disappeared entirely, and the Russian front was found now along the base of the triangle stretching from Riga through Friedrichstadt, through a point somewhat west of Dvinsk, thence almost due south, skirting Pinsk slightly to the east, and again running south in front of Rovno, entering Galicia at a point about halfway between Zlochoff and Tarnopol, and following, slightly to the west, the River Sereth to a point on the Dniester only a few miles west from where it had ended in August, 1915.

How immense a loss this involved for the Russians can be easily seen by a glance at a map. The territory that fell into German hands exceeded 50,000 square miles, with millions of inhabitants, containing some of the most valuable railway lines from a strategic point of view, and including besides Warsaw such important places as Mitau, Kovno, Vilna, Grodno, Bialystok, Brest-Litovsk, Ivangorod, Cholm, Kovel, Pinsk. Though the Russians destroyed many of the railways, drove off men and cattle alike, and moved vast quantities of supplies, equipment, and valuables of all kinds, the time and the facilities at their disposal were so insufficient that the victorious German armies were bound to find still untold quantities of all these. The outbreak of winter, it is true, finally halted the German advance, the force of which gradually would have spent itself anyhow on account of the ever-lengthening lines of communication with its bases. In spite of this, however, it is next to miraculous that the Russians were at all able to form a new line and to withdraw beyond this line, after all, the largest part of their forces. This accomplishment was only a renewed proof of the remarkable ability of the Russian leaders at least along one line—the orderly withdrawal of immense masses. It also showed once more the wonderful resiliency of the Russian armies and the immense advantages which are to be derived from a practically inexhaustible supply of men.

Almost as remarkable as the compactness and efficiency of the Russian retreat was the swiftness and insistency of the German advance. Throughout the German offensive leading up to and following the fall of Warsaw the German armies in the north and center of the eastern front cooperated closely with the Austrian forces in the south. This must be borne in mind as well as the fact that for this entire campaign the General Staffs of the Central Powers had conceived one plan, according to which all their armies proceeded. This frequently necessitated the halting of the advance on one or more points in order to enable some other army at some other point to overcome obstacles which had proved more difficult. Considering the immense extent of the eastern front—which from considerably

over 700 miles at the beginning of August, 1915, gradually shortened to about 600 miles by the end of October, 1915—it is little short of marvelous that the German-Austrian offensive should at no time have lost its cohesion. In order to get a clearer perspective of the somewhat complicated operations of a large number of separate army units, we will divide the entire eastern front into three sections and follow separately the operations of each.

In the north—from the Gulf of Riga to Novo Georgievsk—Field Marshal von Hindenburg was in command. Under him there were four armies, each under a German general: that under Von Bülow in the extreme north; that under Von Eichhorn to the south of the former and facing the Niemen River and the fortress of Kovno; the two other armies under Von Scholtz and Von Gallwitz—the latter the farthest south—were to attack the Nareff-Bobr line between Novo Georgievsk and Lomza.

The central group was under the command of Field Marshal Prince Leopold of Bavaria and was reenforced by another army under General von Woyrsch, which previous to the fall of Warsaw had been fighting more independently somewhat to the south and, a day before the fall of Warsaw, had forced the strong fortress of Ivangorod on August 4, 1915.

The southern group was originally exclusively Austro-Hungarian. But during the early summer of 1915 a German army under General von Mackensen had been sent into Galicia to cooperate with the Austrian forces in freeing Przemysl and Lemberg after they had assisted in throwing back the left wing of the Russian forces then fighting in Galicia and in forcing them to relinquish their hold on the mountain passes of the Carpathians. This problem having been solved, these mixed Austro-Hungarian-German forces were rearranged and reenforced, and, under the command of Von Mackensen, were to attack the retreating Russians around Brest-Litovsk. The left wing of this group was under the command of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand. To the southeast of this entire group was another army under the Austrian General Pflanzer-Baltin, which in the

early summer (1915) had driven the Russians out of the Bukowina.

On August 8, 1915, the attack on Kovno was begun. At the same time the German forces advanced against Lomza and still farther south advanced nearer and nearer to the Warsaw-Bialystok-Vilna-Petrograd railroad, their main objective for the present. All these advances found serious opposition at the hands of the Russians, who successfully attempted to hold up the enemy everywhere in order to insure the safety of their retreating armies. On August 10, 1915, the Russians attempted an unsuccessful sortie from Kovno. Farther south, as far as Lomza, the Russian forces continued their retreat, fighting continuous rear-guard actions for the purpose of delaying the hard-pressing enemy, who, however, gradually came closer and closer to the Nareff-Bobr line. Of course the losses on both sides throughout this continuous fighting were severe. The Russians lost thousands of men by capture, for although they succeeded in withdrawing, practically intact, the principal parts of their armies before the Germans could come up in strong enough numbers to risk attacks, smaller detachments here and there lost contact with the main body and fell in the hands of the Germans and Austrians, so that there passed hardly a day when the official reports did not contain some claims about a few thousand men having been captured.

South of the Niemen the Russians attacked Von Eichhorn's army along the Dvina River, but were thrown back with severe losses. On August 11, 1915, Von Scholtz's group occupied the bridgehead at Vilna, which had been stubbornly defended until the Russian retreat had progressed far enough to make its further possession unessential. The same forces succeeded in crossing the Gac River, south of the Nareff, capturing during three days' fighting almost 5,000 men. Von Gallwitz with his army stormed on the same day Zambroff and then pressed on through Andrzejow toward the east. South of the Nareff, toward the Bug and Brest-Litovsk, the fighting continued throughout the following days. Wherever possible the Russians resisted, and every little stream was used by them to its utmost

possibilities in delaying the advance of the enemy. On August 13, 1915, a strongly fortified position in the Forest of Dominikanka fell into German hands. On the same day an outlying fortified position north of Novo Georgievsk had to surrender and other forces fighting between the Nareff and Bug reached the Slina and Nurzets Rivers. The latter was crossed late on August 15, 1915, after the most severe kind of fighting.

Kovno's garrison attempted on that day another unsuccessful sortie, resulting in the capture of 100 men and in slight gains on the part of the besieging forces. The latter success was also repeated before Novo Georgievsk. By this time the general retreat, and the ever-increasing pressure on the part of the advancing enemy made itself felt even in the most northern part of the Russian line. There, as well as in the farthest south of the line, the least changes took place. But on August 15, 1915, German troops attacked the Russians near Kupishky, at the point where the original Russian front turned toward the southwest, and threw them back successfully in a northeasterly direction, capturing at the same time some 2,000 officers and men.

August 17, 1915, marks the beginning of the end for Kovno and Novo Georgievsk. On that day both of these fortresses lost some of their outlying forts, and before Kovno alone 4,500 Russians and over 200 guns fell into the hands of the Germans. During the night of August 18, 1915, Kovno fell, after having been defended most valiantly against the ever-repeated attacks on the part of the Germans under General von Eichhorn. It was one of the strongest Russian fortresses, with eleven outlying forts on both sides of the Niemen, commanding this river at the point where it turns from its northerly course toward the west and defending the approach to Vilna from the west. Over 400 guns and vast quantities of supplies and equipment as well as about 4,000 officers and men made up the booty. On the same day additional forts of Novo Georgievsk fell, although the fortress itself still held out. The fall of Kovno, expected and discounted as it undoubtedly was by the Russians, was a serious blow. It now became absolutely necessary to withdraw all their forces in that sector beyond the Niemen, in order to avoid their

being cut off by German columns advancing from Kovno to the south along the east bank of the Niemen. This need found expression in the immediate withdrawal of the Russians from the line Kalvarya-Suvalki. For the Germans an additional advantage arose in their ability to establish contact between Von Hindenburg's forces in Poland and Von Bülow's army in Courland and thereby remove all possibility of having the latter's right wing enveloped.

As if the fall of Kovno had given a new impetus to the Germans, their attacks on Novo Georgievsk were now renewed with redoubled vigor. On August 20, 1915, this last of the important strongholds of the Niemen-Nareff-Vistula line fell, although the less important fortresses of Olita, Grodno, and Ossovetz were still in Russian hands. There, too, large numbers of men and guns and immense amounts of equipment and supplies were the rewards of the victor. It is said that the total number of men taken before and in Novo Georgievsk aggregated 85,000, while the number of guns exceeded 700. While the town was still burning from the final bombardment—in which some of the famous Austrian mortars of heavy caliber participated—the German Emperor, accompanied by Field Marshal von Hindenburg, General von Falkenhayn, Chief of the German General Staff, General von Beseler and many other high officers, entered this latest conquest of his victorious armies, over which he later held a review.

The continued retreat of the Russian army and the menacing and ever-increasing pressure of the advancing Germans, of course, could have only one result on the fate of the few positions which were still held by the Russians by now west of the Vilna-Grodno-Bialystok line. Unless they were willing to risk the loss of large numbers of troops by having their lines of retreat cut off, it became necessary to withdraw as many as their means of transportation and their efforts to delay the Germans permitted. As a result the fortified town of Ossovetz on the Bobr was evacuated and occupied by the Germans on August 23, 1915. A few miles south, beyond the Nareff, Tykotsyn suffered the same fate. In the latter instance the Russians lost

over 1,200 men and 70 machine guns. Still farther south, near Bielsk, Russian resistance was not any more successful. East of Kovno the German advance was not as successful; at least the Russians were able in that region to delay the enemy to a greater extent, although the delay had to be bought dearly. But considering the short distance at which Vilna was located and the great importance of that city as a railroad center for the safe withdrawal of the Russian main forces, any effort that promised success was well worth even heavy losses. Throughout the following days the forces of the northern group pressed on relentlessly to the east and south, delayed here and there, but succeeding in forcing back the Russian troops step by step.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CONQUEST OF GRODNO AND VILNA

WITH the fall of Olita, Bialystok, and Brest-Litovsk, which took place on August 25-26, 1915, and is described in more detail in another chapter, the northern group under Von Hindenburg immediately increased its activities. In Courland, south of Mitau, near Bausk, heavy fighting took place, and the Russian lines, which had held their own throughout the entire retreat of the Russian armies in Poland, began to give way. At one other point the Russians had fought back inevitable retreat with special stubbornness, and that was due west of Grodno, in the neighborhood of Augustovo, which had seen such desperate fighting during and following the Russian invasion of East Prussia. But there, too, now the Germans began to make headway and were advancing against the Niemen and the last Russian stronghold on it, Grodno.

At about the same time that considerable activity developed at the utmost southern end of the line in eastern Galicia, operations of equal extent and of great importance took place at the extreme northern end, in the vicinity of Riga. On August 30,

1915, parts of Von Hindenburg's northern group, under General von Beseler, reached positions south of Friedrichstadt on the Dvina. Other troops under General von Eichhorn advanced to the northeast of Olita in the direction of Vilna, while still other forces farther south stormed the city of Lipsk, less than twenty miles west of Grodno, after having forced a crossing over the Vidra River, a tributary of the Sukelka. The fighting around Friedrichstadt continued throughout the last days of August, 1915. To the south of the Niemen the advance against the Grodno-Vilna railway continued without cessation. Whatever troops were not engaged in pursuing the retreating Russian forces were now being concentrated on the approaching attack against the last Russian fortress in Poland—Grodno. To the south of it, by August 31, 1915, they had reached Kuznitsa, on the Bialystok-Grodno railway. The investment of Grodno may be said to have begun with that day. It was then that the first reports came that heavy artillery had been brought up by the Germans and was throwing its devastating shells into the fortress from the western front. Little hope was left to the Russians for a successful resistance. For whenever these heavy guns had been brought into play before, they had blasted their way to the desired goal, no matter how strong or modern had been the defenses of steel and cement.

For the withdrawal of the Russians from Grodno there were available two railroads, one running north to Vilna and another running at first southeast to Mosty, and there dividing into two branches by both of which finally in a roundabout way either Minsk or Kieff could be reached. The Germans, of course, were eager to cut off these lines of retreat. The latter road was threatened by the forces approaching Grodno from the south. Before they reached it, however, troops from Von Hindenburg's group on September 1, 1915, cut the Grodno-Vilna railroad at Czarnoko. On the same day some of the western outer forts of Grodno fell, Fort No. 4 being stormed by North German Landwehr regiments and Fort No. 4a by other troops from Baden. In both cases the Russians resisted valiantly, with numerically so inferior garrisons that the Germans could report

the capture of only 650 Russians. After the fall of these two fortified works the balance of the advanced western forts of Grodno were evacuated by the Russians. This, indeed, was the beginning of the end for the last great Russian fortress. On September 2, 1915, Grodno was taken by Von Hindenburg's army after a crossing over the Niemen had been forced. The Russians, however, again had managed to escape with their armies. The entire lack in the official German announcement of any reference to the Russian garrison of Grodno suggests that there was no garrison left by the time the Germans took the fortress. In spite of this fact, however, the Germans of course continued to capture Russians in fairly large quantities for, naturally, numerous detachments lost contact with the main body during the retreat.

With the fall of Grodno the next objective of the German troops became Vilna. Indeed, on the very day of Grodno's occupation, German cavalry reached the northwest and western region immediately adjoining Vilna, in spite of the most determined Russian resistance. These, of course, were troops that had not participated in the drive against Grodno, but during that time had been fighting the Russians farther to the north, and now that Grodno was no longer to be feared, started a drive of their own against Vilna. Vilna is second in importance among Polish cities only to Warsaw itself. By September 8, 1915, detachments of General von Eichhorn's army had reached Troki, hardly more than ten miles west of Vilna.

The Russian front had now been pushed back everywhere over a wide extent, which varied from about twenty miles in the extreme southeast and about fifty miles in the regions east of Grodno and Kovno, and to the north of this territory to almost 200 miles in the center east of Warsaw and Brest-Litovsk. Of the great Russian fortresses of the first and second line, built as a protection against German and Austro-Hungarian advances, none remained in the hands of the Russians. It was true that the main body of the Russian armies had succeeded in extricating itself from this disaster and withdrawing to the east to form there a new line. But it was also true that this retreat of the

Russian army had cost dearly in men, material, and, last but not least, temporarily, the moral of the troops themselves. For a considerable period of time during the retreat rumors were heard of changes in the leadership of the Russian armies. These rumors gained strength when it was announced that General Soukhomlinoff had resigned as minister of war and that some of the commanding generals of the different individual army groups had been replaced by others. In view of these changes it did not come as a surprise when on September 7, 1915, it was announced that the czar himself had taken over the supreme command of all his armies, which up to that time had been from the beginning of the war in the hands of his uncle, Grand Duke Nicholas.

The announcement reached the outside world first in the form of the following telegram from the czar to President Poincaré of France:

"In placing myself to-day at the head of my valiant armies I have in my heart, M. President, the most sincere wishes for the greatness of France and the victory of her glorious army.

"NICHOLAS."

This was followed on September 8, 1915, by the publication of the official communication by which the czar relieved the grand duke from his command and appointed him viceroy of the Caucasus and commander in chief of the Russian army in the Caucasus. It read as follows:

"At the beginning of the war I was unavoidably prevented from following the inclination of my soul to put myself at the head of the army. That was why I intrusted you with the commandership in chief of all the land and sea forces.

"Under the eyes of all Russia Your Imperial Highness has given proof during the war of a steadfast bravery which has caused a feeling of profound confidence and called forth the sincere good wishes of all who followed your operations through the inevitable vicissitudes of war.

"My duty to my country, which has been intrusted to me by God, compels me to-day, when the enemy has penetrated into

the interior of the empire, to take supreme command of the actice forces, and to share with the army the fatigue of war, and to safeguard with it Russian soil from attempts of the enemy. The ways of Providence are inscrutable, but my duty and my desire determine me in my resolution for the good of the state.

"The invasion of the enemy on the western front, which necessitates the greatest possible concentration of civil and military authorities as well as the unification of command in the field, has turned our attention from the southern front. At this moment I recognize the necessity of your assistance and counsels on the southern front, and I appoint you viceroy of the Caucasus and commander in chief of the valiant Caucasian army.

"I express to Your Imperial Highness my profound gratitude and that of the country for your labors during the war.

"NICHOLAS."

The grand duke addressed his former armies before departing to his new sphere of activity as follows:

"Valiant Army and Fleet: To-day your august supreme chief, His Majesty the Emperor, places himself at your head; I bow before your heroism of more than a year, and express to you my cordial, warm, and sincere appreciation.

"I believe steadfastly that because the emperor himself, to whom you have taken your oath, conducts you, you will display achievements hitherto unknown. I believe that God from this day will accord to His elect His all-powerful aid, and will bring to him victory.

"NICHOLAS,
"General Aide de Camp."

Another of the small southern tributaries of the Niemen which offered excellent opportunities for resistance of which the Russians promptly availed themselves, was the Zelvianka River, which joins the Niemen just west of Mosty. The fighting which went on there for a few days was almost exclusively in the form of rear-guard actions, and was typical of a great deal of the

fighting during the Russian retreat. Whenever the Germans advanced far enough and in large enough numbers to endanger the retreating armies, the latter would speed up as much as possible until they reached one of the many small rivers with which that entire region abounds. There sufficiently large forces to delay the advance, at least for a day or two, would be left behind to use the natural possibilities of defense offered by the waterway to the best possible advantage, while the main body of the army would move on, to repeat this operation at the next opportunity. In most instances these practices held up the German and Austrian advance just exactly in the manner in which it had been designed that it should. Furthermore, the Russians would not give way until they had inflicted the greatest possible losses on their enemies, and in that respect they were frequently quite successful. For first of all many of these rivers have either densely wooded or very swampy banks which lend themselves admirably for defense to as brave a fighting body as the Russian army, and which proved exceedingly treacherous to the attacker; and in the second place the Russians, of course, had the advantage that they were fighting on their own soil, while the Germans were in a strange and often hostile country. In spite of this, however, the German advance, taken all in all, could not be denied, and in practically every one of the cases just described, the final outcome was in a very short time defeat for the Russians and a successful crossing of the watery obstacle by the Germans. This was true also at the banks of the Zelvianka, where the Germans on September 9, 1915, stormed successfully the heights near Pieski, capturing 1,400 Russians. This success was followed up by further gains on the next day, September 10, 1915, that again yielded a few thousand prisoners. A few days later the crossing was forced and the Germans began to attack the Russians behind the next Niemen tributary, the Shara.

Farther to the north especially heavy fighting occurred for a few days around Skidel, a little town just north of the Niemen on the Grodno-Mosty railroad, and it was not until September 11, 1915, that the Germans succeeded in storming it. On the

same day German aeroplanes attacked the important railroad junction at Lida on the Kovno-Vilna railway, and also Vileika on the railway running parallel to and east of the Warsaw-Vilna-Dvinsk-Petrograd railroad. In a way this signified the opening of the German offensive against Vilna. Concurrent with it the fighting on the Dvina between Friedrichstadt and Jacobstadt waxed more furious. Farther south the Germans advanced toward Rakishki on the Kupishki-Dvinsk railroad and between that road and the River Vilia they even reached at some points the Vilna-Dvinsk railroad. Without any lull the battle raged now all along the line from the Dvina to Vilna, and from Vilna to the Niemen. South of this river the attack of the Germans was directed against the Russian front behind the Shara River. By September 14, 1915, Von Hindenburg stood before Dvinsk with one part of his army group. The other parts were rapidly pushing in an easterly direction from Olita and Grodno with the object of attacking Vilna from the south, but they encountered determined resistance, especially in the region to the east of Grodno. With undiminished vigor, however, the Germans continued their advance against Dvinsk and Vilna. To the south of the former city they pushed beyond the Vilna-Petrograd railway, taking Vidsky, just north of the Disna River, in the early morning hours of September 16, 1915.

At that time the fall of both Vilna and Dvinsk seemed to be inevitable. On September 18, 1915, the Germans reported continuous progress in their attacks on Dvinsk. On the same day they broke through the Russian front between Vilna and the Niemen in numerous places, capturing over 5,000 men and 16 machine guns. Of railroad lines available to facilitate an eventual Russian retreat from Vilna, the northern route to Petrograd by way of Dvinsk had been in German hands for some days. The southern route by way of Lida to Kovno was imminently threatened at many points. The only other railroad on the eventual line of retreat to the southeast by way of Minsk was likewise threatened both from the south and north. Vilna taken, the Germans immediately bent all their energies to the task of pursuing the retreating Russians.

On September 18, 1915, Vilna fell into the hands of General von Eichhorn's army. With it the Russians lost one of the most important cities of their western provinces. Vilna is one of the oldest Russian towns, its history dating back as far as 1128. It is the capital of a government of the same name. In the Middle Ages it was the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, but became a Russian possession as a result of the partition of Poland in 1795. Of its population of more than a quarter million almost one-half are Jews. Possessing an ancient Roman Catholic cathedral, it is the seat of a bishop of that church, as well as of a Greek archbishop.

On the same day on which Vilna's fall was reported, part of Von Hindenburg's army, its left wing, was reported at Vornjany, Smorgon, and Molodechno, all places east of Vilna, the last about eighty miles on the Vilna-Minsk railway. In vain did the Russians try to pierce this line, which, by the very nature of the advance, must have been exceedingly thin. It not only held, but managed to force the Russians to continue their retreat, and during this process captured large numbers of them. General von Eichhorn's army, the actual conquerors of Vilna, and Von Hindenburg's center reached Osmiana, thirty miles southeast of Vilna, on September 20, 1915. The right wing, on the same day, had pushed on to the east of Lida and to a point just west of Novogrudok. By September 21, 1915, the crossing of the Gavia River, a northern tributary of the Niemen, was forced north and south of Subolniki, and on September 22, 1915, the Russian front extending from Osmiana to Subolniki and Novogrudok was forced to retreat a one day's march, ten miles, taking new positions on a line: Soli (on the Vilna-Minsk railroad)-Olshany-Traby-Ivie to a point slightly northeast of Novogrudok. A German attempt to outflank the retreating Russians from the north, made on September 23, 1915, at Vileika on the Vilia, about ten miles north of the railway junction at Molodechno, failed. During the next day the Germans again forced back the Russian front eastward for about ten miles, or a one day's march. Along this new front — Smorgon-Krevo-Vishneff-Sabresina-Mikolaieff, just southeast of which latter place the historical Beresina joins

the Niemen—the Russians made a firm stand during the rest of September, 1915.

The German advance was stopped, which fact undoubtedly was partly due to the renewed activity of the Franco-English forces on the west front, as well as to the absolute necessity of giving a chance to recuperate to the armies on the east front, which had been fighting now incessantly for months. September 28, 1915, may be considered approximately as the date at which the Battle of Vilna ended. After that date fighting along the eastern front assumed the form of trench warfare, except in the extreme northern section, and in Volhynia, eastern Galicia. In the sector, bounded in the north by the Vilia, and in the south by the Niemen, the Russian front was along a line running through the towns of Smorgon, Krevo, Vishneff, Sabresina, Mikolaieff.

As a result of the Battle of Vilna and the Russian retreat following it the Germans captured 70 officers, about 22,000 men, a large number of cannon and machine guns, and a great quantity of equipment. Along the entire eastern front the German forces captured men and equipment during the month of September, 1915, as follows: 421 officers, 95,464 men, 37 cannon, 298 machine guns, and 1 aeroplane.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CAPTURE OF BREST-LITOVSK

THE central group under Prince Leopold had hardly entered Warsaw proper when it continued its advance in an easterly direction toward Brest-Litovsk after having occupied Warsaw's eastern suburb, Praga. At the same time other forces completed the investment of Novo Georgievsk, covering the sector between the Nareff and the Vistula. By August 10, 1915, the left wing of the central group had reached Kaluszin and General von Woyrsch's army had become its right wing, taking the Russian positions just west of Lukoff. On the same day German

aviators threw bombs both at Novo Georgievsk and Brest-Litovsk. Under heavy fighting a crossing was forced over the Muchavka and Lukoff was occupied on August 11, 1915.

One of the most awful consequences of the Russian retreat was the sad plight in which the civil population of the stricken country found itself. In the beginning of the retreat the Russians forced these poor people to join in the retreat. This itself, of course, meant untold hardships and frequently death. But as the advance of the Germans became more furious and the retreat of the Russians more rapid, it often happened that these unfortunate persons—irrespective of age, sex or condition—were forced by their Russian masters to turn around again and thus place themselves squarely between the two contending forces.

With the fall of Lukoff an important railroad leading into Brest-Litovsk had fallen into the hands of the invading enemy. Along this line, which is part of the direct line Warsaw-Brest-Litovsk, Austro-Hungarian forces now progressed rapidly in an easterly direction and by August 14, 1915, had reached Miendzyrzets.

In spite of the heaviest kind of bombardment and of almost uninterrupted infantry attacks on Kovno and Novo Georgievsk, both of these fortresses still held out. By August 1, 1915, however, the German lines had advanced far beyond these places and it became clear that their next chief objective was Brest-Litovsk. Each one of the three main army groups directed strong parts of their forces toward this Russian stronghold. From the northwest detachments of Von Hindenburg's group, coming from Lomza and Ostroff, had crossed in a wide front the Warsaw-Bialystok section of the Warsaw-Vilna-Petrograd railway. After taking Briansk they had forced the crossing of the Nurzets, a tributary of the Bug, and the only natural barrier in front of Brest-Litovsk from that direction. They were rapidly approaching the Brest-Litovsk-Bialystok railway. The central group's front — Lukoff-Siedlets-Sokoloff — had been pushed forward to Drohichin on the Bug, only about forty-five miles to the northeast of the fortress. Parts of Von Macken-

sen's southern group under the Archduke Joseph Ferdinand had even reached Biala, less than twenty miles west of Brest-Litovsk, and still other detachments from this group were advancing along the eastern bank of the Bug. Three railroads leading out of the fortress were still in the hands of the Russians—to Bialystok to the north, to Pinsk and Minsk to the east, and to Kovel and Kovno to the south. This continuous offensive against all the Russian lines, of course, cost both sides dearly. The attackers, however, seemed to have had the better end of it. The Russians, according to official figures, lost almost 100,000 men by capture alone during the first two weeks of August, 1915.

The German successes before Kovno and Novo Georgievsk had the result of increasing the vigor of the drive against Brest-Litovsk. Those detachments of Von Hindenburg's army group which had forced a crossing of the Nareff between Bialystok and Lomza pushed on rapidly to the south and threatened as early as August 18, 1915, the northern section of the Bialystok-Brest-Litovsk railway. On the same day Prince Leopold's forces reached the south bank of the Bug, north of Sarnaki. Parts of Von Mackensen's army kept up its attack against the Russians around Biala, forced them across the Bug and into the very forts of Brest-Litovsk and at the same time began the bombardment of the outlying forts with the heavy artillery that had been brought up. Other parts, on that day, August 19, 1915, crossed the northern part of the Cholm-Brest-Litovsk railway east of Vlodava. At the same time Austrian forces under Field Marshal-Lieutenant von Arz and Archduke Joseph Ferdinand cleared the left bank of the Bug, east of Janoff, and thereby completed the investment of the fortress from the west.

Closer and closer the girdle was drawn. Every day the German advance progressed. In the evening of August 19, 1915, Prince Leopold's forces crossed the Bug at Melnik and began to threaten the fortress from the northwest. Still closer to Brest-Litovsk Austrian troops belonging to Von Mackensen's group crossed to the north bank of the Bug near Janoff, while other parts of this group advanced from the south beyond Vlodava and forced the Russians to withdraw from the east bank of the

Bug north of this town. On the Germans and Austrians pushed from all directions except, of course, the east. By August 20, 1915, the lower part of the Brest-Litovsk-Bialystok railway was crossed and the only railway leading out of the fortress toward the east, which at Shabinka separates into two branches, one to Minsk and another to Pinsk, seemed threatened. The German-Austrian advance from the south that day reached Pishicha, apparently directly toward the southern railroad from the fortress to Kovel and from there to Kovno and Kieff.

From all sides now the circle around Brest-Litovsk was drawn closer. The important railroad center at Kovel was taken on August 24, 1915, and immediately the combined German and Austrian forces swung around toward the north along both sides of the road leading to Kobryn, east of the fortress and on the railroad to Pinsk. In the meantime heavy artillery had been brought up and began the bombardment of the fortress. During the night of August 25, 1915, the storming of the forts began. Austrian troops under General von Arz took the three forts on the western front, while a Brandenburg Reserve Corps attacked from the northwest and penetrated into the central forts. The Russians then evacuated the fortress. Its fall immediately imperiled the entire Russian positions and resulted in a general retreat of all Russian forces. The question for them now was no longer how long they were able to delay the enemy, but how much they could save out of the wreck. On the same day that saw the fall of Brest-Litovsk the Russians lost Bialystok, and on the next day, August 16, 1915, they evacuated the fortress of Olita on the Niemen, about halfway between Kovno and Grodno; the latter, the last of Russia's proud string of western fortresses of the first line, of course was now not only seriously threatened but had become practically untenable.

In a way the victory at Brest-Litovsk was an empty one, for the Russians apparently had decided that the fortress would become untenable before long and had withdrawn from it in good time not only practically the entire garrison but also whatever supplies or equipment they could possibly transport, destroying most of what they were forced to leave behind and

blowing up many of the fortifications. The strategical value of the victory was, of course, not influenced by this action. After the fall of the fortress the combined forces of the Germans and Austrians did not rest on their laurels. Without wasting any time they immediately took up in all directions the pursuit of the retreating Russians. For a short time the retreating Russian troops made a determined stand in the neighborhood of Kamienietz-Litovsk, northeast of Brest-Litovsk, but could not withstand the German pressure for long. A great deal of very heavy and bloody fighting took place in this period, August 25 to August 31, 1915, in the dense forest south of Bialystok and east of Bielsk, sometimes known as the Forest of Bialystok and sometimes as the Forest of Bielovies, a little town at the end of a short branch railroad, running east from Bielsk. The Upper Nareff flows through this forest and much of the fighting was along its banks. Austrian troops, a few days earlier, had reached Pushany, just north of the Brest-Litovsk-Minsk railroad and from there pressed on in an easterly direction. By August 21, 1915, the Upper Nareff had been crossed after the hardest kind of fighting on both sides, and the advance continued now toward Grozana. It was not, however, until September 1, 1915, that these troops were able to fight their way out of the forest. At the same time Von Mackensen's troops were following the retreating Russians into the Pripet Marshes. Other parts of this group which had advanced east from Brest-Litovsk along the Minsk railroad reached the Jasiolda River, a tributary of the Pripet, at a point near Bereza, while Austro-Hungarian troops forming part of Von Mackensen's army advanced to east and south of Boloto and Dubowoje. Further north, Prince Leopold's army was still fighting the retreating Russians just north of Pushany, but on September 4, 1915, finally fought its way out of the marshes which—outrunners of the vast Pripet Marshes—are abundant in that region.

Back the Germans and Austrians forced their retreating enemy during the following days, although the pursuit lost a little in force and swiftness. For the troops which were engaged in these operations had been steadily on the move prac-

tically ever since the attack on Warsaw began. On September 6-7, 1915, the Russians again made a stand on a wide front east and south of Grodno. This line stretched south from the Niemen near Mosty to Volkovysk, then southeast to Rushana, thence east of the Pushany Marshes across the Jasiolda River near Chenisk to Drohichyn, on the Brest-Litovsk-Pinsk railroad. On the German and Austrian side these engagements were fought by the armies of Prince Leopold of Bavaria and Field Marshal von Mackensen. At the same time troops belonging to Von Hindenburg's group attacked a newly formed Russian line farther north which extended from Volkovysk in a northwesterly direction to the village of Jeziory and the small lake on which the latter is situated, just north of Grodno. Volkovysk itself and the heights northeast of it were stormed by the Germans on September 7, 1915, on which occasion again almost 3,000 Russians were captured by the Germans.

During the next few days the left wing of this army group fought in close cooperation with the right wing of Von Hindenburg's army along the upper Zelvianka, a southern tributary of the Niemen. The rest of Prince Leopold's army were making the Kobryn-Minsk railroad their objective and were fighting on September 9, 10, and 11, 1915, for possession of the station at Kossovo.

While Von Hindenburg's army group was occupied with the drive on Vilna and Von Mackensen's forces advanced against Pinsk, Prince Leopold's regiments, as we have learned, fought continuously in the sector between the Niemen and the Jasiolda Rivers. The problem assigned to them apparently was that of gaining the Vilna-Kovno railroad in order to cut off the Russian retreat, and by the time Vilna fell, September 18, 1915, they had just succeeded in forcing a crossing over the Shara River, which runs practically parallel to the Lida-Baranovitchy section of the Vilna-Kovno railroad. In a way this gave them command of that section; but they first had to cross the country between the Shara and the railroad, over a width of about twenty miles. Although they were reported on September 19, 1915, as participating in the pursuit of the retreating Russians, they seem to

have arrived just a little too late to capture large numbers of them. In fact, not until September 20, 1915, were they reported actually at Dvorzets, on the Vilna-Kovno railway, while on that day the right wing of this army was fighting west of Oshoff, which, indeed, is to the east of the Brest-Litovsk-Minsk railway, but still a considerable distance (about twenty-two miles) west of Moltshad, a little to the southeast of Dvorzets; stormed Ostroff, and crossed the Oginski Canal at Telechany, after first throwing the Russians across it. These operations netted some 1,000 prisoners. September 22, 1915, brought their left wing about ten miles farther east at Valeika, while farther south the fighting continued in the same locality as on the previous day during the following days. By September 23, 1915, the left wing again had advanced about ten miles along the Servetsh River at Korelitchy, as well as the Upper Shara, east of Baranovitchy and Ostroff. The Russian resistance along this river was maintained during September 24, 1915, although the Germans gained its eastern bank south of Lipsk.

Just as in the Vilna-Niemen sector to the north, the German advance in the region bounded in the north by the Niemen and in the south by the Jasiolda was halted during the last week of September, 1915. And the line of positions which had been reached by the German forces was maintained throughout the rest of the fall and the entire winter, excepting a few minor changes. In a rough way, that front extended as follows: Starting south of the junction of the Beresina with the Niemen, it followed the course of the latter river through the town of Labicha for about thirty miles in a southeasterly direction, then bent slightly to the southwest at Korelitchy, passing to the west of Tzirin, crossed the Brest-Litovsk-Minsk railway about halfway between Baranovitchy and Snoff and about ten miles farther south the Vilna-Kovno railway between Luchouitchy and Nieazvied, at which town it again bent to the southwest, along the Shara River, passing east of Lipsk, and then along the entire length of the Oginski Canal to its junction with the Jasiolda, northwest of Pinsk. Along this line both the Russians and Germans dug themselves in, and throughout the winter a

bitter trench warfare netted occasionally a few lines of trenches to the Russians and at other times had the same results for the other side, without, however, materially changing the position of either.

CHAPTER XIX

THE STRUGGLE IN EAST GALICIA AND VOLHYNIA AND THE CAPTURE OF PINSK

THE fall of Ivangorod and Warsaw was the signal for advance for which the southern group under Von Mackensen had been waiting. General von Woyrsch's forces pressed on between Garvolin and Ryki, northeast of Ivangorod. Other forces threw the Russians back beyond the Vieprz and gradually approached the line of the Bug River. Still farther south, on the Dniester, Austrian troops, too, forced back the Russians step by step. On August 11, 1915, Von Mackensen's troops attacked the Russians, who were making a stand behind the Bystrzyka and the Tysmienika. This hastened the Russian retreat to the east of the Bug.

Throughout the following days the story of the Russian retreat and the German-Austrian advance changed little in its essential features. As fast as roads permitted and as quickly as obstacles in their way could be overcome, the forces of the Central Powers advanced. With equal determination the Russian troops availed themselves of every possible, and quite a few seemingly impossible, opportunities to delay this advance. Every creek was made an excuse for making a stand, every forest became a means of stalling the enemy, every railroad or country road embankment had to yield its chance of putting a new obstacle into the thorny path of the advancing invader. Whenever the latter seemed to ease up for a moment, either to gain contact with his main forces or to rest up after especially severe forced marches, the Russians were on hand with an

attack. But just as soon as the attack had been made the Germans or Austrians or Hungarians, or all three together, were ready to forget all about the temporary let-up and were prepared to meet the attack. Then once more the pursuit would begin.

During the drive on Brest-Litovsk, covering practically all of August, 1915, after the fall of Warsaw, the operations of Von Mackensen's southern group were so closely connected and intertwined with those of the central group that they have found detailed consideration together with the latter. During all this time the extreme right wing in Eastern Galicia did comparatively little beyond preventing an advance of the Russian forces at that point. With the fall of Brest-Litovsk, however, and the beginning of the Russian retreat along the entire front, activities in the southeastern end of the Russo-German-Austrian theatre of war were renewed.

On August 28, 1915, German and Austro-Hungarian forces under Count Bothmer broke through the Russian line along the Zlota-Lipa River, both north and south of the Galician town of Brzezany, about fifty miles southeast of Lemberg, and in spite of determined resistance and repeated counterattacks drove the Russians some distance toward the Russo-Galician border. At the same time other parts of Von Mackensen's army successfully attacked the Russian line at Vladimir Volynsky, a few miles east of the Upper Bug and somewhat north of the Polish-Galician border. The combined attack resulted in a gradual withdrawal of the entire Russian line as far as it was located in Galicia, aggregating in length almost 160 miles. These operations alone netted to the Austro-Germans about 10,000 Russian prisoners. This attack came more or less unexpectedly, but in spite of that was carried on most fiercely. By August 30, 1915, the right wing had forced the Russians back to the river Strypa and was only a few miles west of Tarnopol.

Farther north another army under the Austrian General Boehm-Ermolli encountered determined resistance along the line Zlochoff-Bialykamien-Radziviloff, where the Russians were supported by very strongly fortified positions. Still farther

north the attack progressed in the direction of the strongly fortified town of Lutsk, on the Styr River, less than fifty miles west of the fortress of Rovno, in the Russian province of Volhynia. This fortress, together with Dubno, farther south on the Ikwa, a tributary of the Styr, and with Rovno itself formed a very powerful triangle of permanent fortifications erected by Russia in very recent times. The purpose for which they had been intended undoubtedly was twofold; first, to offer an obstacle to any invasion of that section of the Russian Empire on the part of Austro-Hungarian troops with Lemberg as a base, and secondly, to act as a base for a possible Russian attack on Galicia.

In view of these facts, it was surprising that on August 31, 1915, only three days after the resumption of actual fighting in Eastern Galicia, the fall of Lutsk was announced. The very form of the official Austrian announcement rather indicates that the Russians must have evacuated Lutsk of their own accord, possibly after dismounting and either withdrawing or destroying its guns. For the report states that only one—the Fifty-fourth Infantry—regiment drove the Russians by means of bayonet attacks out of their first-line trenches and then followed them right into Lutsk. This, of course, could not have been accomplished so quickly unless the Russians had already withdrawn at that point as well as everywhere else. At the same time their line was also pierced at Baldi and Kamuniec, which forced their withdrawal from the entire western bank of the Styr. German troops, fighting under General von Bothmer in cooperation with the Austro-Hungarian army of General Boehm-Ermolli, on the same day (August 31, 1915) stormed a series of heights on the banks of the Strypa, north of Zboroff, although they encountered there the most determined resistance on the part of the Russian forces.

The immense losses in men, guns, and materials which the Russians suffered throughout the month of August, 1915, in spite of their genius for withdrawing huge bodies of men at the right moment, will be seen from the following official statement published on September 1, 1915, by General Headquarters of the German armies. These figures do not include the losses suf-

fered by the Russian armies which in Eastern Galicia were fighting against Austro-Hungarian troops.

"During the month of August the number of prisoners taken by German troops in the eastern and southeastern theatres of war, and the quantities of war materials captured during the same period, totaled more than 2,000 officers and 269,800 men taken prisoners, and 2,000 cannon and 560 machine guns.

"Of these, 20,000 prisoners and 827 cannon were taken at Kovno. About 90,000 prisoners, including 15 generals and more than 1,000 other officers, and 1,200 cannon and 150 machine guns were taken at Novo Georgievsk. The counting up of the cannon and machine guns taken at Novo Georgievsk has not yet been finished, however, while the count of machine guns taken at Kovno has not yet begun. The figures quoted as totals, therefore, will be considerably increased. The stocks of ammunition, provisions, and oats in the two fortresses cannot be estimated."

The fall of Lutsk had serious consequences for the Russians. With this fortress gone the entire line south of it was endangered unless promptly withdrawn. It was, therefore, not surprising that when on September 1, 1915, the left wing of the Austro-German forces crossed the Styr on a wide front north of Lutsk the entire Russian line down from that point should give way. That, of course, meant the evacuation of Galicia by the Russians. Brody, about halfway between Lemberg and Rovno on the railroad connecting these two cities, was taken by Boehm-Ermolli's army on September 1, 1915, and these troops immediately pushed on across the border. General von Bothmer's forces, slightly to the south, kept up their advance from Zaloshe and Zboroff in the direction of Tarnopol and the Sereth River. Still farther south the third group under General Pflanzer-Baltin drove the Russians from the heights on the east bank of the Lower Strypa. The general result of all these operations was the withdrawal of the Russian front along the Dniester between Zaleshchyki in the south and Buczacz in the north, to a new line along the Sereth, starting at the latter's junction with the Dniester. But there the Russians made a stand. The

hardest possible fighting took place on September 4, 1915, all along the line in Galicia, Volhynia, and on the Bessarabian border. Much of it was of the "hand-to-hand" kind, for both sides had thrown up fortifications and dug trenches, which they took turns in storming and defending.

One of the heaviest battles of this period took place on September 6, 1915, lasting into the early morning hours of the 7th, along a front about twenty-five miles wide, with its center about at Radziviloff, a little town just across the border of the Lemberg-Rovno railroad, a few miles northeast of Brody. There the Russians had strongly intrenched themselves. The fighting was most bitter, especially around the castle of Podkamen, which Boehm-Ermolli's troops wrested from the Russians only through repeated and most fierce infantry attacks and by means of terribly bloody hand-to-hand fighting. However, finally the Russians had to give way, leaving over 3,000 men in the hands of their adversaries. Farther south the armies of Generals von Bothmer and Pflanzer-Baltin, too, had to withstand continuous attacks of the Russians and more or less fighting went on all along the southeastern front as far down as Nova-Sielnitsa, a few miles southeast of Czernovitz at the point where the borders of Rumania, Galicia, and Bessarabia meet.

The result of the Austrian victory of September 7, 1915, near Radziviloff was the further withdrawal on September 8, 1915, of the Russian line, extending over fifty-five miles to the east bank of the Ikwa River, a tributary of the Styr, on the west about thirty miles northeast of Radziviloff on the Lemberg-Rovno railroad. This withdrawal, of course, seriously threatened this fortress, which, being on the west side of the Ikwa, was open to direct attack from the west and south as soon as the Russians had been thrown back beyond the Ikwa. And, indeed, the next day, September 9, 1915, brought the fall of the city and fortress of Dubno. Austrian troops under General Boehm-Ermolli took it by storm, while other detachments advanced to the Upper Ikwa and beyond the town of Novo Alexinez. This was as serious a loss to the Russians as it was a great gain for their enemies. For Dubno commanded not only the valley of

the Ikwa, but it also blocked the very important railway and road that run from Lemberg to Rovno.

Farther south along the Sereth the Russian lines had been greatly strengthened by new troops brought up from the rear by means of the railroad Kieff-Shmerinka-Proskuroff-Tarnopol. This enabled the Russians to make determined attacks all along the river, which were especially severe in the neighborhood of Trembovla. General von Bothmer's German army at first successfully withstood these attacks in spite of Russian superiority in numbers, but was finally forced to withdraw from the west bank of the Sereth to the heights between that river and the Strypa River, which are between 750 and 1,000 feet above the sea level. But on September 9, 1915, the German forces advanced again and threw the Russians along almost the entire line again beyond the Sereth. Farther south on that river, near its junction with the Dniester, Austrian regiments under General Benigni and Prince Schoenburg stormed on the same day the Russian positions northwest of Szuparka, capturing over 4,000 Russians.

While Von Mackensen's army was pushing its advance toward Pinsk, the principal city in the Pripet Marsh region, along both sides of the only railroad leading to it—the Brest-Litovsk-Kobryn-Pinsk-Gowel railroad line—heavy fighting continued in Volhynia and East Galicia. West of Kovno the Russians were thrown back of the Stubiel River on September 9, 1915, by the Austrians. General von Bothmer's German army, which formed the center of the forces in Volhynia and Galicia, advanced from Zaloshe on the Sereth toward Zbaraz, a few miles northeast of Tarnopol. Before the latter town, which the Russians seemed to be determined to hold at any cost, new reenforcements had appeared and opposed the advance of the Austro-German forces with the utmost fierceness. In that sector they passed from the defensive to the offensive, and with superior forces threw back the enemy again from the Sereth to the heights on the east bank of the Strypa on September 10, 1915. But with these heights at their back the German line held and all Russian attacks broke down.

In spite of this they were renewed on September 11, 1915, with such strength that small detachments succeeded in gaining a temporary foothold in the enemy's trenches, where the bloodiest kind of hand-to-hand fighting occurred. At that moment General von Bothmer ordered an attack on both flanks of the Russians, who thereby were forced to give up the advantage which they had so dearly bought. However, this did not make the Russians lose heart. Again and again they came on, and so fierce were their onslaughts that the Austro-German line was finally withdrawn to the west bank of the Strypa on September 13, 1915. To the north, along the Ikwa from Dubno to the border, reenforcements were also brought up by the Russians and succeeded in holding up any further advance on the part of the Austrian troops. Especially hard fighting took place in the neighborhood of Novo Alexinez, a little village just across the border in Volhynia.

On September 15, 1915, Von Mackensen took Pinsk after having driven the Russians out of practically all the territory between the Jasiolda and Pripet Rivers. Considering that this city is, in a direct line, more than 220 miles east of Warsaw, this accomplishment was little short of marvelous, especially in view of the fact that the territory surrounding Pinsk—the Pripet Marshes—offered immense difficulties. However, the same difficulties were encountered by the retreating Russians in even greater measure, because, while there is some solid ground west of Pinsk, there is practically nothing but swamps to the north, south, and east of the city, the direction in which the Russian retreat necessarily had to proceed. It was thus possible for Von Mackensen to report on September 17, 1915, the capture of 2,500 Russians south of Pinsk.

In the Volhynian and Galician theatre of war the struggle continued without any abatement. Neither side, however, succeeded in gaining any lasting and definite advantages. One day the Russians would throw their enemies back across the Strypa, only to suffer themselves a like fate on the next day in respect to the Sereth. More or less the same conditions existed east of Lutsk and along the Ikwa, in both of which regions the Russians

continued their attempts to drive back the Austro-Germans by repeated attacks.

After the conquest of Pinsk, Von Mackensen's army for a few days continued its advance from that town in a northeasterly, easterly, and southeasterly direction. But here, too, the advance stopped about September 23, 1915, after some detachments which had crossed to the north and northeast of Pinsk, over the Oginski Canal at Lahishyn, and over the Jasiolda between its junction with the canal and the Pinsk-Gomel railroad, had to be withdrawn on that date. In this sector—from the Jasiolda to the Styr at Tchartorysk just south of the Kovel-Kieff railway—the fighting assumed the form of trench warfare, just as it did along the rest of the front south of the Vilia River. The front there was along the Jasiolda from its junction with the Oginski Canal, swung around Pinsk and east of it in a semicircle, through the Pripet Marshes, crossed the Pripet River at Nobiet and then continued in a southerly direction to Borana on the Styr, along that river for a distance of about twenty miles, across the Kovel-Kieff railroad at Rafalovka to Tchartorysk on the Styr.

Farther south the Russians gained some slight successes, and even forced the Germans to retreat to the west bank of the Styr at Lutsk. The fighting in that vicinity and along the Ikwa was very severe. Especially was this true in the neighborhood of Novo Alexinez, where, in very hilly country, the Russians launched attack after attack against the Austro-German forces, without, however, being able to dislodge them from their very strong positions. The battle raged furiously on September 25, 1915, when some Russian detachments succeeded in advancing a few miles to the southwest of Novo Alexinez into the vicinity of Zaloshe. However, the Austrian resistance was so strong that the Russians lost about 5,000 men. When on September 27, 1915, a German army under General von Linsingen had again forced its way across the Styr at Lutsk and threatened to outflank the right wing of the Russian forces, the latter finally gave way and retreated in the direction of Kovno. A Russian attempt to break through the Austro-German line, held by General von Bothmer's army, on the Strypa west of Tarnopol, was made on October 2,

1915, but failed. The same was true of attacks on the Ikwa west of Kremenet and north of Dubno near Olyka, made on October 6, 1915. These were followed up on the next day, October 7, 1915, with further attacks along the entire Volhynian, East Galician, and Bessarabian front.

At that time this front extended as follows: Starting at Tchartorysk on the Styr, a few miles south of the Kovel-Gomel railroad, it ran almost straight south through Tsuman, crossed the Brest-Litovsk railroad a mile or two north of Olyka, passed about fifteen miles west of Rovno to the Rovno-Lemberg railroad, which it crossed a few miles east of Dubno, then followed more or less the course of the Ikwa and passed through Novo Alexinez. There it turned slightly to the west, crossed the Sereth about ten miles farther south, passed through Jezierna on the Lemberg-Tarnopol railroad and crossed the Strypa at the point where this river is cut by the Brzezany-Tarnopol railroad, about fifteen miles west of the latter city. Again bending somewhat, this time to the east, it continued slightly to the west of the Strypa to a point on this river about fifteen miles north of Buczacz, then followed the course of the Strypa on both sides to this town, bent still more to the east, passing through Pluste, about ten miles southeast of which it crossed the Sereth a few miles north from its junction with the Dniester, coming finally to its end at one of the innumerable bends in the Dniester, practically at the Galician-Bessarabian border and about twenty miles northwest of the fortress of Chotin. Although the amount of territory gained by the Austro-Germans in the period beginning with the fall of Warsaw was smaller in that section than in any other on the eastern front, it was still of sufficient size to leave now in the hands of the Russians only a very small part of Galicia, little more than forty miles wide at its greatest width and barely eighty miles long at its greatest length.

CHAPTER XX

IN THE PRIPET MARSHES

A GREAT deal of the fighting after the fall of Brest-Litovsk, August 27, 1915, occurred in and near the extensive swamp lands surrounding the city of Pinsk and located on both sides of the River Pripet. To the Russians this part of the country is known as the Poliessie; its official name is the Rokitno Marshes, after the little town of that name situated slightly to the west, but it is usually spoken of as the Pripet Marshes. Parts of this unhealthy and very difficult region are located in five Russian governments: Mohileff, Kieff, Volhynia, Minsk, and Grodno, and these swamps therefore are the border land of Poland, Great Russia, and Little Russia. A comparatively small section of them has been thoroughly explored and their exact limits have never been determined. In the west and east the Rivers Bug and Dniester respectively form a definite border, which is lacking in the south and north, while to the northwest the famous Forest of Bielovies may be considered its boundary. According to a very rough estimate the Pripet Marshes are approximately one-half as large as the kingdom of Rumania; only one river of importance runs through them, the Pripet, from which, indeed, the marshes take their popular name. On both of its sides the Pripet has a large number of tributaries, among which on the right are: the Styr, the Gorin, the Usha, and on the left the Pina, the Sluch, and the Ptych. A large number of small lakes are distributed throughout the entire district. Quite a large number of canals have been built, one of which connects the Pina with the Bug, another the Beresina, of Napoleonic fame and a tributary of the Dnieper, with the Ula and through the latter with the Dvina. In this manner it is possible to reach the Baltic Sea by means of continuous waterways from the Black Sea.

It is very difficult to conceive a clear picture of this region without having actually seen it. In a way one may call it a gigantic lake which away from its shores has been filled in with

sand to a small extent and to a larger extent has turned into swamps. It is densely covered with rushes, and out of its waters, which are far from clear, a multitude of stony islets rise up covered with dense underbrush. Its center is surrounded by an even more dense seam of pine forests. Its rivers and brooks are so slow that they can hardly be distinguished from stagnant waters. The only town of any importance within its limits is Pinsk on the Pina.

In a general way five railroad lines have been built through various parts of the Pripet Marshes; the most important being a section of the Rovno-Vilna railroad; two others of special importance to the Russian retreat were the Brest-Litovsk-Pinsk-Gomel and the Ivangorod-Lublin-Cholm-Kovel-Kieff road. The Brest-Litovsk-Minsk railroad also passes in its greatest part through the outlying sections of the Pripet Marshes. The effect of these swamp lands on the Russian retreat and the German advance, of course, was twofold: it increased the difficulty of the Russian retreat, throwing at the same time very serious obstacles in the way of the advancing Germans.

To the southward, and in a region very similar in all its characteristics, is the Volhynian triangle of fortresses: Lutsk, Dubno, and Rovno. Here too, during the fighting around these three places, the Russian and German armies had to contend with tremendous difficulties, which were caused chiefly by the fact that this part of the country, with the exception of a few sections, was almost impassable. This fact, undoubtedly, was primarily responsible for the decision of the Russian Government to locate these three powerful fortresses at that particular point, because the very difficulties which nature had provided became valuable aids to a strong defense against an invasion of Russian territory by Austro-Hungarian troops from the south.

The fortresses of Lutsk and Dubno date with their beginning as far back as 1878, at which time they were built according to the plans of the Russian General Todleben. A little later the fortifications of Rovno were added to this group, and one of the strongest triangles of Russia's fortifications was formed thereby. The sides of this triangle measure thirty, twenty-five, and forty

miles respectively. The longest of these is the line between Lutsk and Rovno, with its back toward the Pripet Marshes. Of the three fortresses Rovno is the most important from a strategical point of view, for it defends the junction of three of the most valuable railroads, the railway leading from Lemberg into Volhynia, that running south from Vilna into Galicia, and the railroad which by way of Berticheff indirectly connects Kieff with both Warsaw and Brest-Litovsk. The three fortresses, therefore, acted as a wedge between the most southeastern and the Polish zones of operations. They secured the connection of any Russian forces in Poland with the interior of Russia, and made possible the transfer of forces through the protection which they gave to the various railroad lines necessary for such a transfer. On account of the conditions of the surrounding territory it was impossible for any attacking army to dispose of the fortresses by investing them with part of their available forces while the balance of them continued on their advance; for the only way to reach the country in back of the three fortresses was by way of the fortresses themselves, which meant, of course, that they would have to be taken first before the advance could be continued. Furthermore, the fortresses also acted as a barrier, protecting the approaches to Kieff, enabling the undisturbed concentration of an army in that protected zone while the enemy would be busily occupied in battering his way through the fortress triangle. The latter were still more strengthened by the Rivers Ikwa and Styr, which flow to the southwest and north of them.

The fortifications of all these three points were not of particularly recent origin, although they had been remodeled at various times since their original creation. Lutsk, a city of some twenty thousand inhabitants, is located on a small island of the Styr, and controls the Kovel-Rovno section of the Brest-Litovsk-Berticheff railroad. Some ten forts of various degrees of strength surrounded the central fortifications, forming a girdle of forts with a circumference of approximately ten miles. Dubno, southeast of Lutsk, a town of about fifteen thousand inhabitants, is located in the valley of Ikwa on its left bank, and protects the

Brody-Zdolbitsa section of the Lemberg-Rovno Vilna railroad, with its branches to Kovel, Brest-Litovsk, and to Kieff. The forts are not as numerous as at Lutsk, but are more advantageously located and, therefore, proved more difficult for the attacking Austro-Hungarian-German troops. Besides the Styr and Ikwa Rivers this comparatively small sector offers other natural advantages in the form of a number of smaller streams, the defense of which is greatly assisted by the marshy condition of their banks and the heavy growth of underbrush to be found there.

Rovno, the largest of the three cities, with about twenty thousand inhabitants, was first fortified in 1887, and as a railroad junction is even more important than either Lutsk or Dubno. Its fortifications are built to serve as a fortified bridgehead. They amount to seven forts of which five are located on the left bank of the Ustje and two on the right. These forts were built in the form of a semicircle, at a distance of four to six miles from the city itself and with a circumference of approximately twenty-five miles. Originally this group of fortresses undoubtedly was intended to act as a basis for a Russian invasion of Galicia and Hungary rather than as a means of defense against an invasion from these countries. And, indeed, in the earlier part of the war, when the Russians forced their way into Galicia and to the Carpathian Mountains, they fulfilled their purpose with greater success than they were destined to achieve now as a means of defense.

CHAPTER XXI

FIGHTING ON THE DVINA AND IN THE DVINA-VILIA SECTOR

AT the time Warsaw fell, in the beginning of August, 1915, the eastern front north of the Niemen extended as follows: Starting on the western shore of the Gulf of Riga, at a point about twenty miles west of Riga and about thirty miles northwest of Mitau it ran in a slightly curved line in a southeasterly

direction to the town of Posvol on the Musha River, passing just west of Mitau and the River Aa, about ten miles west of Bausk. From Posvol a salient with a diameter of about twenty miles extended around Ponevesh on the Libau-Dvinsk railroad, with its most eastern point a few miles west of Kupishki on the same railroad line. From there the southern side of the salient passed through Suboch and Rogoff to Keydany on the Nievraza, and along the banks of that stream to its junction with the Niemen, about five miles west of Kovno.

In a preceding chapter we have learned how this line was pushed back by the Germans during and following the drive on Kovno and Vilna. After Vilna's fall on September 18, 1915, the Germans had advanced along the western shore of the Gulf of Riga to Dubbeln, about ten miles west of Riga, at the Aa's delta. But, although the Germans succeeded in crossing the Aa at Mitau and establishing their positions to the east of that city, they were unable then, and in fact during the following months, to approach closer to Riga at that point, so that a salient was formed west of Riga, which at its widest point was over twenty miles distant from this point. Just south of Mitau, the south side of this salient bent almost straight to the east for a distance of thirty miles until it reached Uexkuell on the Dvina, about twenty miles southeast of Riga. From there the line followed almost exactly the east bank of the Dvina, passing through the important towns of Friedrichstadt and Jacobstadt, from where it bent due south, gradually drawing away to the west of the Dvina River and passing west and southwest of Dvinsk at a distance of about ten miles. All along this line considerable fighting took place throughout September, 1915, as has already been narrated.

During September 21-22, 1915, this fighting was especially severe west and southwest of Dvinsk, where the Germans were making unsuccessfully desperate efforts to break the Russian lines and get within striking distance of Dvinsk. However, although they managed to maintain their own lines against all Russian attacks and to gather in some 5,000 prisoners, they could not break the Russian defensive.

The Russian forces at this point were led by General Russky, among whose commanders was Radko Dmitrieff, of Balkan War fame. Both of these generals are to be counted among the greatest Russian leaders and they were especially expert in everything that pertained to fortresses and their defense. As wonderful as the German military machine had proven itself, as severe as their often repeated offensives were, as superior as their supply of artillery and munitions was both in quality and quantity, Russky and Dmitrieff proved a good match for them all. The possession of Dvinsk at that particular moment would have meant an almost inestimable advantage to the Germans, just as its loss would have been apt to mean the complete rout of the Russians. For once the line broken to a sufficiently great width at that point, all the Russian forces having their basis on Petrograd, Smolensk, and Moscow might have been turned completely.

This supreme importance of Dvinsk was understood equally well by both sides. On the part of the Germans this understanding resulted in unceasing attacks by all available means and forces, while the Russians on their part were prepared to defend their positions with a stubbornness and determination unequaled by the case of any other fortress with the possible exception of Riga and Rovno. The harder the Germans drove their armies against Dvinsk the harder the Russians fought to repulse them. The latter were greatly assisted in this by the fact that strong reenforcements had been sent to this crucial point from Petrograd and from other interior points. Still more important was the beginning of considerable improvement in the Russian supply of guns and shells. Even though, in that respect, Russky was undoubtedly still far behind his German opponent, Von Hindenburg, yet he was at that moment in a much better position than any other Russian general. Dvinsk had to be held at all costs—the Russian General Staff apparently had decided—and to Dvinsk, therefore, were sent all available guns and munitions.

Originally the fortress of Dvinsk was far from being up to date or particularly effective and imposing. It consisted of an old citadel which, it is true, had been improved considerably; but

even then its outworks extended hardly farther than a mile beyond its own range. As soon as General Russky assumed command he began feverishly to improve these conditions. In this undertaking he was greatly assisted by the nature of the countryside surrounding Dvinsk. Immediately to the northwest, west, south, and southeast the River Dvina formed a strong line of natural defense. Beyond that was a region thickly covered with small and big lakes, which swung around Dvinsk as a center, in the form of an immense three-quarters circle, starting to the south of the Libau-Ponevesh-Dvinsk railroad and stopping just west of the Dvinsk-Pskoff-Petrograd railroad. The diameter of this circle varies from thirty miles to sixty. The ground between these lakes is swampy in many places, difficult of approach, and comparatively easy to defend even against superior forces, especially because most of it is not entirely flat, but interspersed with hills and woodlands.

Throughout this entire district the Russians built a dense network of trenches, and it was especially by means of these that the Germans were repulsed not only successfully but with great losses to their attacking forces. The more important of these earth fortifications were built in a novel fashion. The main part of each had the form of a crescent with its horns turned toward the enemy. Every attack from the latter, in order to find a point big enough for an effective attack, had to be frontal in nature; that means, it had to be directed against the main part of the crescent-shaped trench. But, whenever such a frontal attack would be executed and just as soon as the attackers would be inside of the sides of the crescent, machine guns and rifle fire from its two horns would hit them on both flanks and frequently destroy them utterly. In order to make the Germans advance far enough into the crescent, advanced trenches had been built in front of its horns, which were connected with the main part of the crescent by communicating trenches.

These advanced trenches were manned by comparatively small forces, whose duty it was to offer a sufficiently strong resistance to draw a fairly good-sized number of Germans. This purpose having been accomplished the troops in the advanced trenches

would give way and retire by means of the communicating trenches into their main positions. Again and again the Germans followed them into the death-dealing hollow, to be decimated unmercifully in the manner described above. At the same time Russian guns would open fire and direct a sheet of shells toward the back of the attacker, thus cutting off most effectively any reenforcements which might have made it possible for the Germans to either storm the main trench or withdraw at least that part of their attacking party which had not yet fallen prey to Russian ingenuity. It is said that General Russky contrived to throw out fortifications of this nature around Dvinsk in an immense circle which had a diameter of twenty miles and with its circumference formed a front of almost two hundred miles. Of course, this front was not in the form of an unbroken line. There were any number of places along it that could be occupied by the Germans practically at will. But once there the next advance would invariably bring them face to face with a new obstacle, kill hundreds of them, and frequently result in the withdrawal of the remnant to its main line, from where another advance would be attempted promptly on the next day.

One other feature of these fortifications contributed a great deal to their becoming practically impregnable. The Russian engineering troops saw to it that all these works were built as narrow as possible and were dug as deep as the ground permitted. It was this fact which made the German artillery fire so surprisingly ineffective at this point. In spite of its unceasing fierceness the results it accomplished were as nothing compared with the effort and expense it involved. For, of course, no matter how brilliant the gunnery, how wonderful the cannon, how devastating the shells, if the target at which they are aimed is sufficiently far away and sufficiently small, the result will be disappointing; and the Russians at Dvinsk saw to it that the Germans experienced a long series of costly and heartbreaking disappointments of that nature.

A Hungarian staff correspondent, who was with Von Hindenburg's army, had this to say about the siege of Dvinsk, or rather about the attacks on its outlying fortifications: "The German

army could not make use of its heavy artillery, for it proved quite useless, owing to the extreme narrowness of the Russian trenches. In the lake district south of Dvinsk the Russians made the utmost of their natural defenses, and even the advanced trenches there were only occupied after very heavy losses, and then retained under the most trying circumstances. In taking Novo Alexandrovsk—a village about fifteen miles southwest of Dvinsk on the Dvinsk-Kovno post road—the losses incurred on our part were unprecedented in severity."

Another correspondent in writing to his paper, the "Vossische Zeitung," describes the fortifications of Dvinsk as follows: "Every rod of land is covered with permanent trenches, roofed securely against shrapnel and shell fragments and connected with so-called 'fox holes'—small shelters in which the garrisons are safe against the heaviest shells. Sand trenches, skillfully laid out, so that they are mutually outflanking, smother exploding projectiles. The flanking fire of the machine guns often annihilates the assailants when they are apparently successfully attacking. One company alone thus lost fifty-one dead in one day. Between September 15 and October 26, 1915, Dvinsk, in a way, was captured fifteen times, but it is still in Russian hands. The bombardment has reduced the fortress in size one-half without affecting in the least the strength of the remainder."

South of Dvinsk, however, the Germans had been able to advance their line slightly farther to the east. On September 27-28, 1915, and the following days they were fighting on the shores of Lake Drysvidly, about ten miles east of the Dvinsk-Vilna railroad, and at Postavy, ten miles south of the Disna River, a southern tributary of the Dvina. Again on October 1, 1915, the Russians attacked north of Postavy, as well as south on the shores of Lakes Narotch and Vishneff, but without success. Throughout the next day the fighting continued, although not particularly severe. But on October 6, 1915, stronger Russian forces were again thrown against the German lines. In the beginning they gained ground at Koziany, on the Disna, and south on Lakes Drysvidly and Vishneff, but the day's net results left the Germans in possession of

their old positions. Russian attacks in that region during October 7-8, 1915, suffered the same fate.

On the latter day the Germans made an attack in force south of Ilukst, ten miles to the northwest of Dvinsk, and took the village of Garbunovka, capturing over 1,000 Russians and some machine guns. On the next day, October 9, 1915, the Russians attempted unsuccessfully to regain these positions and were also defeated to the west of Ilukst, north of the Ponevesh-Dvinsk railroad. On the 10th, attacks west of Dvinsk and Vidzy, north of the Disna, had no better results.

Throughout the following week, October 10 to 17, 1915, the Russian army continuously attacked along the entire line west and south of Dvinsk. In some instances they succeeded in breaking temporarily and for short distances through the German line. But in no case did this lead to a lasting success and, in some instances even, the Germans closed the line again so quickly that the Russian detachments who had broken through were cut off from their main body and fell into the hands of the Germans.

Both on October 22 and 23, 1915, the Russians launched strong attacks near Sadeve, south of Kosiany, which were repulsed in both instances. On the latter day the Germans again attacked northwest of Dvinsk, near Ilukst, and captured some Russian positions as well as over 3,500 men and twelve machine guns, maintaining their hold on the former in the face of strong Russian counterattacks on October 24, 1915. Small German detachments which had advanced toward the north of Ilukst on that day, however, had to give way promptly to superior Russian forces. In spite of this the Germans repeated the experiment on the following day with stronger forces and at that time gained their point. On October 26, 1915, the Germans broke through the Russian line south of the Ponevesh-Dvinsk railroad, between the latter city and the station of Abele, but had to give up part of the newly-gained positions during the night only to regain it again the next morning. A Russian attack against this position undertaken later on that day, October 27, 1915, broke down under German artillery fire, before it had fully developed.

In a similar way the most furious kind of fighting took place throughout this period on the Riga salient. There, too, the Russians, successfully held the Germans at a safe distance. In the second half of October, 1915, when Von Hindenburg apparently had become convinced that he would not succeed in taking Dvinsk before the coming of winter, if at all, the German general began to shift the center of his operations toward the north and massed large forces against Riga. According to some reports as many as six army corps were concentrated at that point. The country there, though different from that in the vicinity of Dvinsk, was hardly less difficult for the Germans and offered almost as many opportunities for natural defenses to the Russians.

We have already described at the beginning of this chapter the exact location of the salient that ran around Riga from Dubbeln on the Gulf of Riga by way of Mitau to Uexkuell on the Dvina. The first sector of it—Dubbeln-Mitau—was approximately twenty-five miles long, and the second—Mitau-Uexkuell—about thirty miles. On its western and northwestern side it was bounded to a great extent by the River Aa and by the eastern half of Lake Babit. The latter is about ten miles long, but only a little more than one mile in width and runs almost parallel to part of the south shore of the Gulf of Riga, at a distance of about three miles.

On its southern and southeastern sides the salient followed, for some ten miles, first the post road and then the railroad from Mitau to Kreutzburg on the Dvina—about fifty miles northwest of Dvinsk—and then turned to the northeast for another twenty miles or so. On this latter stretch it crossed two tributaries of the River Aa, the Eckau and the Misse. Through the entire depth of the salient, in a southwesterly direction from Riga, runs a section about twenty-five miles long of the Riga-Mitau-Libau railroad, cutting it practically into two equal parts. Another railroad connects Riga with Dubbeln and still another with Uexkuell, so that the Russians had good railroad communications to every point of the salient. The inside of the latter, besides the rivers mentioned, contained some half dozen other smaller water-

ways, tributaries of the Aa and Dvina, and was covered almost entirely with dense forests. In the center of these there are located extensive swamps known as the Tirul Marshes, and smaller stretches of swamp lands are also found in various other sections of these woods.

With the exception of the Mitau-Riga railroad there are only two means of approaching Riga, a fairly good road that leads along Lake Babit from the Aa to Riga, and another that runs from Gross Eckau on the Eckau River through the woods by way of Kekkau to Riga and in its northern part parallels the Dvina. The latter stream widens considerably about ten or fifteen miles above Riga and forms many small islands, the largest of which is Dalen Island, just to the north of Kekkau. Separating it from the mainland is only a comparatively narrow arm of the Dvina. The northern tip of the island is solid, somewhat elevated ground, and commands the eastern main arm of the Dvina as well as its eastern bank. If the Germans could gain this island their chances of reaching Riga from the south would be many times increased. An attack in that direction had nothing to fear from a flanking movement on the part of the Russians, because the latter would be prevented from getting at their advancing enemy either from the west or northwest by the impassable Tirul Marshes.

On October 16, 1915, the Germans decided to attempt this maneuver and made a rather unexpected attack east of Mitau and north of Eckau and forced the Russians back of the Misse River, an eastern tributary of the River Aa, near Basui, on which occasion they claimed to have captured over 10,000 men. Some more ground was gained in that neighborhood during the next three days.

Immediately the Russians retaliated by an equally unexpected naval operation far to the north, at the western entrance to the Gulf of Riga. A Russian fleet appeared there and bombarded the ports of Domesnaes and Gipken. Detachments were landed. Although they destroyed some of the fortifications that had been erected there by the Germans and scattered the small forces which the Germans had there, they withdrew within a few days.

This operation had practically no influence on the further developments along the balance of the front, except that, threatening as it was for the time being to the German rear, it resulted in a temporary reduction of the pressure that the Germans were trying to exert from the south.

One other attempt to reach Riga before the coming of winter was made toward the end of October. Apparently the German plan was to make a triple attack on the Baltic fortress. From the south another drive was made against Dalen Island. From the southwest the new offensive started from Mitau in the direction of Olai along the Mitau-Riga railroad, and from the west reenforcements that had been concentrated at Tukum advanced on both sides of Lake Babit. However, this offensive, too, was unsuccessful. Especially that started along the north shore of Lake Babit proved costly to the Germans. There the stretch of land between the gulf and the lake is nowhere more than three miles wide, and in many places not that wide. Through its entire length flows the Aa. It is only sparsely wooded. Comparatively small Russian forces successfully opposed the advancing Germans, whose narrow front was easily dominated and driven back by machine guns and field artillery; from the gulf, too, Russian war vessels trained their guns on the Germans, and the attack was quickly broken up with considerable losses to the attackers and only small losses to the defenders. Against these conditions the Germans seemed to be helpless. They fell back along the north shore of Lake Babit and along the Aa toward their base at Schlock. This, of course, necessitated a simultaneous withdrawal of the German forces on the south shore of the lake. The Russians immediately followed up their advantage, and by November 6, 1915, the Germans had withdrawn all their forces from along the north side of the Tirul Marshes. About that time the Germans withdrew beyond the Aa to its west bank, and on November 8, 1915, the Russians stormed the village of Kemmern, about five miles west of Schlock. During the next two weeks, November 8 to 22, 1915, continuous fighting took place to the north of the Schlock-Tukum railroad. This resulted in the storming by the Russians of the villages of Anting and

Ragasem on the shores of Lake Kanger and the withdrawal of the Germans beyond the west shore of this lake.

As early as the beginning of November weather conditions had made fighting on a large scale impossible for a few weeks. Attacks and counterattacks, such as we have just described, were still kept up in front of Dvinsk and Riga, it is true, but they gradually lost in extent and severity and brought practically no changes of any importance. Along the rest of the front, down to the Vilia, the fighting assumed, like everywhere else on the eastern front, the form of trench warfare, interrupted occasionally by artillery duels of considerable severity, doing, however, more damage to the landscape than to the military forces. Aero attacks on a small scale, too, were the order on both sides whenever opportunity and climatic conditions permitted. This state of affairs continued throughout the months of November and December, 1915, and January and February, 1916.

Throughout this period the Russo-German lines in the Dvina-Vilia sector remained practically unchanged, although, of course, minor readjustments took place here and there. In the north, along the Aa and Dvina, and before Dvinsk, it was still in the same position that has been described in the beginning of this chapter, except that it had been pushed back from Dubbeln to Lake Kanger, Kemmern, and the River Aa. At the point where it crossed the Vilna-Dvinsk railroad, about ten miles southwest of Dvinsk, it bent still more to the southeast, passed east of Lake Drysvidly, then about ten miles east of Vidzy, crossed the Disna near Koziany, and reached its most easterly point a few miles west of the village of Dunilovichy. From there it bent back again in a westerly direction, but ran still toward the south, about ten miles east of Lake Narotch, and at the same distance to the west of the town of Vileika to the Vilia, just north of Smorgon.

In spite of all the severe fighting before Dvinsk and Riga, neither of these cities had yet been brought within the range of the majority of the German guns, even though continuous local successes had been gained on the part of the German troops. The losses which the latter suffered cannot be stated definitely,

because no official figures, either Russian or German, are available. They must have been severe, however. The net result of all the fighting in the region before Dvinsk, which had then been in progress practically for fifty days, therefore, was next to nothing for the Germans and hardly more for the Russians. Neither had been able to gain any definite success over the other. Throughout all this time the Germans not only made innumerable infantry attacks, but also kept up an incessant artillery fire, throwing as many as 100,000 shells a day against the Russian positions. That they did not gain their point speaks well, not only for the valor of the Russian army, but also for the ability of its leader, General Russky.

CHAPTER XXII

WINTER BATTLES ON THE STYR AND STRYPA RIVERS

AS the autumn of 1915 drew to an end and winter approached, the fighting along the eastern front changed from attacks over more or less extensive spaces to trench warfare within very restricted territory and to artillery duels. This change took place, as we have already seen, as far as the front from the Vilia River down to the southern limits of the Pripet Marshes was concerned, as early as the end of September, 1915. Farther south, however, along the Styr and its tributary, the Ikwa, and in the region through which the Strypa, Sereth, and Dniester flow, in the Russian provinces of Volhynia and in Austro-Hungarian East Galicia, the severest kind of fighting was kept up much longer.

The preceding chapter carried us, as far as this territory was concerned, up to October 7, 1915. On that day the Russians attacked with all available forces of men and munitions along the entire Volhynian, Galician, and Bessarabian front. One of the principal points of contention was the little town of Tchar-

torysk on the Styr, about five miles south of the Warsaw-Kovel-Kieff railroad. To the northwest of it the Germans under General Linsingen began a counterattack on October 7, 1915, and threw the Russians across the Styr. A Russian counterattack, undertaken on the 8th with the object of regaining their lost position, was frustrated by artillery fire. To the north, just across the railroad at Rafalovka, attacks and counterattacks followed each other as regularly as day and night. For about two weeks a series of local engagements on this small front of ten or fifteen miles took place with such short periods of rest that one may well speak of them as the Battle of Tchartorysk. Neither side, however, seemed to be able to gain any marked advantage.

About the 18th of October, 1915, the Russians succeeded, after bringing up reenforcements, in driving a wedge into the Austro-German line which they were able to maintain until October 21, 1915. On that day the Austro-Germans, too, brought up reenforcements and started a strong offensive movement. From three sides the small salient was attacked near Okonsk, and after furious resistance it caved in. Russian counterattacks to the north and south, undertaken in order to relieve the pressure on the center, had no effect. The Russians were forced to retreat, and left 15 officers, 3,600 men, 1 cannon, and 8 machine guns in the hands of their enemies. However, the Russians came on again and again, and the battle continued for a number of days. Step by step the Russian troops were forced back again toward the Styr. Village after village was stormed by the combined Austro-German forces. In many cases small villages changed hands three or four times in as many days. Not a day passed without repeated attempts on the part of both sides to break through the line. But though some of these were successful, sometimes for the Russians and sometimes for their adversaries, the gains were only temporary and local, and were usually wiped out again before long. On November 16, 1915, however, the Austro-German forces gained a decided victory over the Russians, who were thrown back to the east bank of the Styr under very heavy losses. By that time the winter

VICTORIOUS TEUTON ARMIES ADVANCE IN RUSSIA

INCLUDING

AUSTRIAN AND RUSSIAN TROOPS AND REFUGEES · PRINCE LEOPOLD IN WARSAW · STATUE OF VON HINDENBURG

Copyright, Paul Thompson

Unveiling the wooden statue of Von Hindenburg, who cleared East Prussia of invaders and advanced far into Russia. Behind the statue is the Monument of Victory

Copyright, Brown & Dawson

Austrian infantry resting during the Teutonic drive into Russia. Some of the men carry the picks and shovels of sappers, while others are provided with the steel-pointed staffs of mountaineers

Copyright, Paul Thompson

The central figure is Prince Leopold of Bavaria, who led the victorious Teutons into Warsaw, August 6, 1915. The Prince with his staff are posed before Warsaw's magnificent cathedral

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An Austrian convoy passing through the Russian town of Dubno, in Volhynia, passively watched by the inhabitants who have already seen the retreating Russians go by

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A trainload of Russian prisoners transported across a gorge in Galicia over a bridge which has just been repaired by the victorious Teutons

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A peasant woman of Galicia tilling the fields. Although so many of the men are at war, sowing and reaping go on wherever the land is not actually within the battle lines

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Russian peasants, refugees since the tide of war first swept over their village, returning with such possessions as are left them to build their home again

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A Russian peasant woman has constructed a rude shelter out of the ruins of home, and leaving her baby in the unharmed cradle, is preparing a meal in what was once a kitchen

weather had become too severe for extensive operations, and comparative inactivity ruled along that part of the front.

While the Battle of Tchartorysk was raging, engagements of varying importance and extent, but all of great severity and costly to victor and vanquished alike, took place at other parts of the Volhynian, Galician, and Bessarabian front. Just south of Tchartorysk, near Kolki on the Styr, Austrian troops gained additional territory on October 7, 1915. Still farther south at Olyka, west of Rovno, the Russians were thrown back by a bayonet attack, carried out by two Austro-Hungarian infantry regiments. On the Ikwa, northwest of Kremenets, a very bitter struggle ensued for the village of Sopanov, which during one day, October 7, 1915, changed hands not less than four times, but finally remained in the possession of Austro-Hungarian forces west of Tarnopol. Russian attacks gained temporary successes, which were lost again when German and Austro-Hungarian reenforcements were brought to their assistance. On October 8, 1915, these attacks were not only repeated, but new attacks developed on the Strypa at Buczacz, Tluste, and Burkanov, which, however, were all repulsed. During these two days the Russians lost over 6,000 men on the Styr and Strypa Rivers. Again, on October 9-10, 1915, the Russians attacked along these two waterways and on the Ikwa. On the latter day four separate attacks were launched at Burkanov alone. On the 14th another attempt was made to break through the line west of Tarnopol. Then a period of comparative rest set in for about a week.

But on October 20, 1915, a new Russian attack near Novo Alexinez, a small border village, resulted in a slight gain, which, however, could not be enlarged in spite of heroic efforts. An attack east of Zaloshe on the Sereth was likewise without success. Both of these were repeated on October 21-22, 1915, without better results. During the next week the fighting was reduced considerably in volume and severity, until on October 30, 1915, a new attack with replenished forces against the Strypa line started the ball rolling once more. On the same day a Russian aeroplane was brought down southeast of Lutsk.

According to official figures published by the General Staffs of the German and Austro-Hungarian armies respectively, the Russian losses during the month of October, 1915, amounted to 244 officers, 41,000 men, 23 cannon, and 80 machine guns, all captured by German forces, and 142 officers, 26,000 men, 1 cannon, 44 machine guns, and 3 aeroplanes captured by the Austro-Hungarian troops. Corresponding figures for the armies of the Central Powers are not available.

On the last day of October, 1915, renewed fighting broke out again on the Strypa, near Sikniava, where the Russians had concentrated strong forces. The Austrians met a strong attack with a prompt counterattack and carried the day. As before, the fighting, once started at one point on the Strypa, quickly spread. On November 2, 1915, the engagement at Sikniava was continued, and a new attack developed near Buczacz with the usual more or less negative result for both sides—maintenance of all attacked positions without gain of new territory. Another series of very bitter clashes occurred between November 4-7, 1915, near the village of Sienkovce on the Strypa. During the same period fighting went on also at many other points of that small river, which by this time had seen the flow of almost as much blood as water.

Southeast of the village of Visnyvtszyk on the Strypa seven separate Russian attacks were launched within these four days. On the 7th a strong attack was made also in the neighborhood of Dubno from the direction of Rovno without gaining ground. Isolated attacks of varying extent took place for a few more days. But by that time severe winter weather restricted operations in this sector just as it had done along the balance of the eastern front. Of course occasional attacks were started whenever a lull in the snowstorms or a favorable change in temperature made it possible. But, generally speaking, the Styr and Strypa section now settled down to trench fighting, artillery duels, and minor engagements between advanced outposts. The Russian losses during the month of November, 1915, as far as they were inflicted by Austro-Hungarian troops, totaled 78 officers, 12,000 men, and 32 machine guns.

Late in December, 1915, on the 24th, the Russians, disregarding climatic conditions, once more began an extensive offensive movement in East Galicia and on the Bessarabian border, with Czernovitz, the capital of the Austro-Hungarian province of Bukowina, as its apparent objective. It lasted until January 15, 1916, or twenty-three days, interrupted only occasionally by a day or two of slightly decreased activity. Its net result for the Russian army, in spite of very heavy losses in killed, wounded, and captured, was only the certainty of having inflicted fairly heavy losses on the German and Austro-Hungarian troops opposing them. Territory they could not gain, at least not to a large enough extent to be of any influence on the further development of events. The severest fighting during these operations took place near Toporoutz and Rarawotse on the Bessarabian border. Much of it was at very close range, and on many days the Russians made three and four, sometimes even more, successive attacks against one and the same problem. Especially bitter fighting occurred on January 11, 1916, when one position was attacked five times during the day and a sixth time as late as ten o'clock that night.

Coinciding with the Russian attempt to break once more through the Austro-Hungarian line into the Bukowina, attacks were launched from time to time at various places on the Dniester, Sereth, and Strypa, especially in the vicinity of Buczacz. None of these, however, had any effect, nor were other very occasional attacks west of Rovno and on the Styr of more avail. During the three weeks of fighting the Russians, according to official Austro-Hungarian figures, lost over 5,000 men by capture.

After a few days' lull the Russian armies began another battle with strong forces near Toporoutz and Bojan, east of Czernovitz, on January 18, 1916. The severity of the fighting increased on the next day, January 19, 1916, and at the same time heavy artillery fire was directed against many other points along the East Galician front. Again the Russians suffered severe losses during their repeated storming attacks against the strongly fortified positions of the Austro-Hungarian troops.

THE BATTLE FRONT IN RUSSIA, JANUARY 1, 1916

After two days' preparation, by means of artillery fire, another attack was thrust against the Toporoutz section on January 22, 1916, but when this, too, did not bring the desired result the Russians apparently lost heart. For, from then on for the balance of January, 1916, as well as through the entire month of February, 1916, they made further attacks only at very rare intervals, but otherwise restricted themselves to artillery duels and trench fighting.

CHAPTER XXIII

ON THE TRACKS OF THE RUSSIAN RETREAT

IN the preceding chapters we have followed, day by day, the military events of the Russian retreat and of the German advance after the fall of Warsaw and Ivangorod. With admiration we have heard of the deeds of valor accomplished by the various armies of the three belligerents. The endurance that they displayed, the hardships that they had to bear, the losses that they suffered—both victor and conquered—have given us a clearer idea what war means to the men that actually wage it. Occasionally we have had glimpses of the devastation that it brings to the country over the hills and valleys and over the plains and forests of which it rages. Again and again we have been told of the horrible suffering and utter ruin which was the share of the civic population, rich and poor, young and old, man, woman, or child. But these latter features are apt to be overshadowed by the more sensational events of battle and siege, and in the excitement of these we easily lose sight of the tremendous drama in which not trained soldiers act the parts, but ordinary everyday beings, farmers and merchants, working men and women, students and scholars, people of every age, race, and condition, people just like we ourselves and like those with whom we come in daily contact throughout our entire life. And

yet their numbers run into the tens of millions as compared with the hundreds of thousands or perhaps four or five millions of soldiers, and it is *their* suffering—bared as it is of the glory and excitement that usually lightens the life of the fighting man—that is the quintessence of war's tragedy.

No one who has not been himself a participant or an actual observer of these horrors can really and truly gauge their full extent or describe them adequately. But a clear record of them is as much an essential requirement of a war's history as a chronological narration of its various events. In the following paragraphs will be found gathered reliable reports based on the keen observation of men who in their capacity as special correspondents of various newspapers had opportunities to collect and observe facts at close range and the very vicinity where they transpired. They come from various sources, but chiefly from the narrative of a war correspondent published in the Munich "Neueste Nachrichten," who was himself an eyewitness of what he describes. Although they refer more especially to that part of Russia that is situated between the Galician border and the fortress of Brest-Litovsk—the region of the Bug River—they might have been written equally well of any part or all of the eastern theatre of war, for they are typical of what happened throughout that vast territory that stretches from the eastern front as it stood at the time of Warsaw's fall in the beginning of August, 1915, to that other line that formed a new front, much farther to the east, when the German advance into Russia came to an end in the latter part of October, 1915:

"The first anniversary of the war had just passed. Again summer was upon us, like in those days of mobilization. The atmosphere was full with memories of the beginning of the campaign. Out of Galicia an endless column rolled to the north into Poland. The old picture: the creaking road, overloaded with marching troops, with artillery lustily rolling forward, with caravans of supply trains. Repeating itself a thousandfold, the sum total of the mass deepened the impression and made the idea of the 'supreme command of an army' appear like a

fairy tale. Supply wagon after supply wagon, mile after mile, in a long, never-breaking chain!

"The greater the distance of the observer, the deeper becomes the impression of the general impulse of advance, of the sameness of its direction and motion. Can we see a difference as compared with earlier times? Can we notice if the new class of soldiers are equal to the older; if the horses are in the same good condition as before? All in all, it is the same play, even if with new actors in its parts, which was acted before us during the very first days of the war, never to be forgotten: a variety of types, unified by the purpose that was common to all. . . . Of course, the close observer will always be able to make distinctions. To him all soldiers are not just soldiers. Through their uniforms he will recognize the farmer, the artisan, the factory hand, the slim young volunteer, the genial 'Landwehr' or 'Landsturm' man, the teacher, schoolboy, student, clerk, and professional soldier.

"Before them stretches a new country. Broader plains, lower ranges of hills than in Galicia. To the right and left, as far as the eye reaches, fields, meadows, and swamps. Here and there, windmills. Immense forests, different from those they knew at home: pines, oaks, and birches, all mixed together, with some ash-trees and poplars, only slightly cut down and low of growth. The retreating Russians have tried everywhere to burn down forest and field, but have destroyed in most places only narrow strips and small spots that look now like islands: there the trees have been bared of their foliage in the middle of the summer as if it were the early spring, and the pines are red and brown like beech trees in the winter time. Every few miles trenches and shelters had been cut into the landscape and ran across field and forest, hills and valleys, masterpieces of their kind, cunningly hidden, partly untouched. Alongside the road there were many, many soldiers' graves, singly or sometimes combined into small cemeteries. The Russians bury their dead with devotion. Double-armed Greek crosses betray their burial places. . . . But not always did they find time during their retreat. Occasionally a penetrating odor of decay announces the fact that some of

their dead had to be deprived of burial. Then, very rarely only, indeed, one comes across black, swollen corpses, so terribly gnawed and disfigured by millions of small crawling animals, that all individuality, all humanity, has been destroyed.

"The advance moves on for miles on curious roads. Are these still roads? There is no foundation. Just cuts have been made into the ground, which is sandy here and muddy there and again swampy. During dry weather they take turns in being dusty like the desert, or hard as stone or gently yielding; during rain they are without exception unreliable, spiteful, dangerous. The burden of the uninterrupted transport traffic escapes to the left and to the right farther and farther into the edges of the fields, cutting off continuously new widths of wheel tracks so that roadways are formed 150 to 300 feet wide, which narrow down only at bridges or fords by sheer necessity. All bridges, even those that have been spared by the Russians, have to be solidly renewed and supported, for they had never been intended for such demands. Across furrows and deeply cut wheel tracks, across loose footbridges, through puddles that are more like ponds, and through deep holes, motorcars—fast automobiles and gigantic motor trucks—rush and rumble madly, from time to time helplessly sinking down into the mud and mire till relays of horses and the force of the next detachment pushing forward on its way rescues them and they are off again.

"The road is lined with a sad seam of dead horses. Still other cadavers poison the air and entice swarms of greedy crows. The Russians have killed all cattle which they were unable to carry along quickly enough or to eat upon the spot, and then left the carcasses on or alongside the road: cattle, pigs, sheep have been shot down in this fashion, so that the pursuer should find no other booty than ashes and carrion.

"At some distance from the line of march there may be left some untouched villages, sound, normal, human settlements. But one does not see them. Wherever the fighting has been going on, we pass by débris and ruins. Big villages have been burned from one end to the other into empty rows of chimneys and blackened heaps of tumbled-down houses.

"The churches alone sometimes have been shown some respect. As far as they have not been riddled by shells or have not lost their roofs, they are still standing, clean and almost supernatural with their white or pink wooden walls, their shrilly blue or deep red domes, and their shining gilt decorations. Everything else has gone up in flames or has been shot to pieces.

"Out of the general wreckage a few utensils and pieces of furniture stick out here and there: bent beds, crumpled-up sewing machines, half-melted pans and pots. Sometimes it is even possible to form an idea of the former appearance of a house from the design of its blackened wall paper or from a few remnants of some other decorations. Here and there small corners and nooks have been preserved as if by a miracle, and, in some unaccountable way, have survived the ruin that surrounds them on all sides: strips of a flower garden, or perhaps a summer-house with a table in it and a cover and breakfast dishes on the table.

"Up on a chimney, half of which has tumbled down, stands a stork, as if he were meditating over the ruin wrought by human hands; suddenly he pulls himself together, spreads out his wings with quick decision, floats down into his familiar pond and forgets the raving of maddened mankind in the enjoyment of a juicy frog. Through the labyrinth of a fallen-down barn limps a big black cat, tousled and scratched, already half-maddened from hunger, vicious like a wounded panther. Along what had been once streets run packs of dogs gone wild, restlessly smelling at dirt and corpses, growing bolder day by day until finally they have to be shot down.

"Only few people can stand it on this God-forsaken stage of misery. Occasionally a few thin Jews in their long coats walk across the ruins of the market place, which look like a stage setting. On their shoulders they carry in a bundle their few belongings, like pictures of the Wandering Jew. Their families live for a short time from whatever they can scratch together from the ruins or out of the trampled-down fields. They cook and bake on one of the stoves standing everywhere right out in the open road and offer their poor wares for exhibition and sale

on a few boards, a last effort to support life by trade. In the case of the women, no matter what the nationality, it always seems as if they had saved out of the horrible destruction only their best and brightest clothes. At a distance their colors shine and smile as if nothing at all had happened. But upon coming up closer, one can easily see how little these unfortunate beings carry on their poor backs.

"More than once we stand perplexed before the touching picture of a short rest on the 'flight to Egypt.' A little family—is it the only one that has remained behind when everybody else wandered away, or have they already come back home because there was nothing better to be found out in the world? In the garden of a plundered farmhouse they have put up a poor imitation of a stable out of charred boards, and in it they live more poorly than the poorest gypsies. Their lean cow has been tied to a bush; among the trampled-down vegetables their equally lean mule grazes. The mother squats on the ground, nursing a child, while father and son are stirring up a heap of glowing ashes and roasting a handful of potatoes that they have dug up somewhere.

"The return pilgrimage of the natives has already begun at an extensive rate. The advancing Germans are met everywhere by long lines of them, on foot and in wagons, carrying with them carefully and lovingly the few remnants of their herds. What has been their experience?

"One nice day the Cossacks had appeared at their farms and had told them: 'Not a soul is allowed to remain here. The Germans are approaching and the Germans will torture you all to death if they catch you. Take with you whatever you can carry. Everything else must be burned and destroyed, so that the Germans won't find anything that they can use.' That was enough to make these poor, ignorant farmers take leave of their homesteads. By the thousands they wandered off quickly and without much hesitation. Some were driven away like so much cattle, day by day farther into an uncertain future. Others were carried in long columns of wagons to the nearest railroad and still others were led orderly by their own mayors and vil-

lage elders. In the inland of the Empire they were to found for themselves new homes. The czar was going to look after them. Russia is powerful and rich. It will lure the Germans into its swamps so that they will drown there miserably. It will draw them all the way to Moscow and there they will experience the deadly fate of 1812. Just like Napoleon will the Germans suffer this time. This patriotic hope, however, did not compensate the farmers for their lost homes. It is true they get enough to eat every day. At their resting places they are fed from field kitchens supplied and equipped by the Russian army and administered by civil committees. Hunger they did not need to suffer. But for all that, their homesickness will not down, and the dislike of the continuous wandering, the aversion to strange places, the loathing of the unorderly, irregular life of nomads strengthens their determination to turn off their road at the first opportunity and to seek the long way back to their village, in spite of the terrible Germans.

"But in the meantime the world has been turned upside down, their homes are unrecognizable; nothing, absolutely nothing, is as it used to be. Wherever there is the smallest nook that has remained inhabitable, some stranger has built a nest. The new authorities speak German, rule German, and run things in a German way. The need to protect themselves against epidemics, and political prudence, demand that these homeless wanderers should not be permitted to wander around any longer at will. Into cities they are not allowed to enter, or even to pass through them. Out in the country, the field police watch them carefully, for more and more frequently adventurous groups are formed—states in a very small way and without any regard for anybody else. Strong fellows with plenty of nerve use this rare opportunity, make themselves leaders and dictators of these groups, organize new communities, which they rule with a strong hand, make laws, inflict punishments, and impose their will just as they please. That makes it necessary for the German authorities to interfere promptly and to bring order and authority to bear on these insecure conditions. The population

is registered and no one is allowed to immigrate or to emigrate without the proper papers.

"Of course, there are also good, carefully tended main roads besides the bad country paths, and some of them are even paved for miles. One of these runs right straight from the south toward the Polish city of Cholm. For miles one can see this road, which looks like a ribbon that grows narrower and narrower all the time; in the background is a forest, through and beyond which the road runs. At the farther end of the forest, on the shoulders of a hill, are the white buildings of the monastery of the Russian bishopric of Cholm. Only when one comes within a few hundred steps of these buildings does one see the low, long, stretched-out little town in line with the ridge of the hills that drop away to the north. . . .

"A little farther on, to the northwest of this little country town, is the larger, rich city of Lublin. There all the advantages of civilization are in evidence: street cars, electric lights, department stores, coffee houses. But here, too, war, want, and misery have left their impression on everything: old men, women, children in rags, asking for shelter and stretching out their thin arms for bread. On all the squares troops pass and cross each other, delaying the traffic. There are Germans and Austro-Hungarians in long columns and then again a long line of Russian prisoners of war, marching to work. Among the well-dressed ladies and gentlemen only rarely some figures remind one of the fact that this is Eastern Europe: tall, thin Jews in their long caftans and Jewish women with their unnatural wigs; male and female beggars there are in great numbers, and they are so hungry looking and ragged, so deep-eyed and sickly, that one can hardly manage to swallow one's food in their vicinity, if one happened to have chosen a seat on the terrace of one of the hotels.

"A few days later Brest-Litovsk was taken. Behind the troops that stormed the fortifications during the night and thus forced the fall of the city, pressed from early morning great masses of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies. They came on over all the roads: infantry, artillery, cavalry,

engineering troops, supply detachments, and in between, impatiently puffing, the automobiles of the higher staff officers, everybody eager to enter the big fortress and to get hold of the big booty.

"But what a disappointment! From far off clouds of dust and smoke announced the fate of this famous fortress. The bridges across the Bug had all been destroyed, those of steel blown up and the wooden ones burned. Only slowly separate small units managed to cross on temporary narrow bridges to the citadel. Everything else crowded together on both sides of the road and spread out into the fields, filling the flat surrounding country as far as the eye could reach with one single, immense, many colored war camp: groups of horses, field kitchens, resting infantrymen, innumerable white backs of wagon after wagon.

"Whoever managed to enter Brest-Litovsk saw for the first time a big city devastated and ruined as pitilessly as formerly only villages had been made to suffer. Hundreds and hundreds of houses, once human habitations, now smashed down to their very foundations, or mangled so as to have lost all meaning, ruins containing nothing but broken stones and ashes and at the best here and there a stair banister, suspended in midair. And all destruction had not been wrought as a result of a long siege and its continuous assaults of gunfire and shells. In one night, at the command of the Russian authorities, this Russian city had been laid waste. Only about one-quarter of it had remained entirely or partly habitable. Only in the citadel were there left supplies of any great amount. There quite some quantities of flour and canned food, weapons and munitions, war and railroad equipment, had escaped the well-prepared explosion, and had been saved only because there had not been enough time to complete the work of destruction and to explode all the mines that had been laid. A happy exception among this horrible riot of wholesale destruction was found occasionally in the case of some few estates of the Polish nobility. In some way they escaped here and there and were passed by without suffering demolition and despoliation in spite of the fact that the villages near which they were usually located were almost always

masses of smoking ruins. The manor houses of some of these estates often became the temporary lodging of some division or even some army corps staff. For they filled one of the chief requirements for such headquarters: a sufficiency of many large, light rooms which permitted to combine the necessary offices with the officers' quarters under the same roof. Every high command needs a number of offices for its various branches of service, in war as well as in peace. At that, war demands a hundredfold measure of ready cooperation and punctual working together. What happens from early in the morning, far into the night and often throughout the night in these offices during the course of a lively action on the battle field is nothing more or less than administrative activity as it is known to us and practiced in peace, but of a degree of activity, responsibility, and decision, of an importance and variety as times of peace do not demand from an army officer.

"Day and night numerous telegraphs and telephones, established often by means of very skillful and exposed connections, receive reports, communications, inquiries, and requests from the front and transmit orders, instructions, decisions, and information to the front, and at the same time maintain a similar service with superior headquarters. The number of subjects which have to be watched continuously is legion: movements of their own and the enemy's forces; changes in their own and the opponent's positions; news and scouting service; losses, reserves; lodging, provisioning, arming of the troops; sanitation, prevention of epidemics, ambulances, hospitals; counting and handling of booty and prisoners; military law, religious matters, gifts; health and continuity of the supply of mounts; climate, weather, condition of the water; condition of streets, bridges, fortifications; means of intercourse and traffic of all kinds; railways, mails, wagons, motors, pack animals; aeroplanes; telegraph and wireless stations.

"And all these matters, within a certain group of the army, change hourly, perhaps, and are continuously subject to unexpected modifications; at the same time they depend in their outward relations on events that happen in other adjoining army

groups, on the general military and political conditions, on the decisions and interference of general headquarters. And if the staff quarters of two or three army groups have to consult with each other about every action and re-action before they make their various moves, unceasing activity must be displayed by everyone in order to accomplish all that each day demands. This activity which at one and the same time actuates and reports, acts, observes, and accounts, requires the possession of many manly virtues: the energy of strong nerves, clearness, wisdom, knowledge, self-consciousness, and decision. Every commander shares in it. But the greatest demands are made by it on the few supreme commanders on whom depends the fate of millions.

"Thus the summer months quickly passed by. As they passed, the advance continued. In spite of this, however, the crops were brought in from the fields so recently conquered. And what was accomplished in this direction will some day form a separate chapter in the economical history of this war.

"Much of the crops, of course, had been destroyed. In many other cases all the agricultural machines and implements had been carried off or destroyed. And then there was a great lack of labor. What was there to be done? Under the leadership of officers with agricultural experience separate commissions were formed. They gathered up all the implements and machines that could be found or could be repaired again and then ordered by the hundred and thousand from the country in the rear what they still lacked and soon battalions of war prisoners were busy peacefully gathering in the wheat in the fields. Before long the harvest had been completed. Threshers and threshing machines were put to work. Wherever flour mills were in condition to allow of repairs, mechanics were set to this task. And soon a steady stream of flour poured forth that enabled the invaders to feed their armies, their prisoners, and whatever part of the civil population had returned, to a great extent from supplies raised and gathered in the occupied region itself, a remarkable success gained from a combination of German organization, Russian labor, and Polish versatility."

CHAPTER XXIV

SIDELIGHTS ON THE RUSSIAN RETREAT AND GERMAN ADVANCE

THE difficulties which the Austro-German troops encountered in pursuing the withdrawing Russians were in many instances greatly increased by the very strong field fortifications which the Russians had thrown up everywhere to stem the advance of the enemy. How effective these fortifications were may be readily understood from the following description which is taken from the report of a special correspondent of a south German newspaper who had an opportunity to inspect these positions soon after they had been wrested from the Russians:

"In fortifying this position the Russians had indeed created a masterwork of modern field fortification. Deep, broad trenches had been fitted so closely to the landscape that in most instances they could be recognized as such only at very close distances. Almost all these trenches had been covered with a fivefold layer of tree trunks, on top of which there was to be found another layer of earth and over that again a solid layer of sod. The wooden pillars which supported this covering had in many places been fastened by means of wooden plugs into strong tree trunks, which in turn had been deeply imbedded in the bottom of the trench. Everywhere there were to be found openings for one and sometimes even two or three sharpshooters or for machine guns. Powerful shelters had been erected as a protection against shrapnel. Everywhere the trenches had been located in such a manner that one would outflank the other. In all the trenches there were to be found shelters, many of which were spacious enough to allow a whole company to retreat to them, and to these the Russians withdrew whenever the German artillery fire was directed against the trenches. These shelters were deep down below the ground; their entrances were comparatively small and protected with manifold layers of rail-

road rails. In front of these positions had been erected strong successive lines of entanglements which consisted partly of barbed wire and partly of strong abatis, formed of trees and their branches. In front of one section of these trenches the Russians had cut down a piece of woodland between 150 and 300 feet wide. They had then left the trees on the ground wherever they happened to have fallen and covered the entire space with a confusion of barbed-wire entanglements."

Another difficult problem which confronted both the Russians in their retreat and the Germans in their advance was that of transportation, especially in the region between the Vistula and the Bug Rivers. Not only is the number of railroads in that territory very small, but neither side had available a large enough number of railroad cars to transport the large number of men and vast quantities of equipment involved. This necessitated the creation of new means of transportation. Acording to a correspondent of the Hungarian newspaper "Az Est" the problem was solved by the Austro-German armies in a remarkable way. In the first place the number of horses before each wagon was increased. Where formerly two horses had been used, four were employed now, and where four used to be considered sufficient the number was increased to six. This resulted in an unending line of giant transports drawn by teams of four and six horses like they had never been seen before.

The work of these horses was greatly lightened by field railways. So quickly were these built that they seemed to grow right out of the ground. In some places industrial railways of this nature, already in existence, were utilized. Both steam and horsepower were used on these railways. Valleys were bridged over; gradients were reduced by every available means. At regular distances pleasant little block houses were to be found, which served as stations and guardhouses. The condition of the roads did not permit the use of motor trucks to any great extent, but wherever there was even a thread of possibility for motor trucks to get through they were promptly called upon to assume a leading part as a means of transportation. The immensity of the problem may well be understood by the fact

that approximately two thousand automobiles of all kinds were employed by the German army of the Bug River.

All of this could be moved quickly. Everything that was necessary to make repairs was carried along. Supplies were heaped on motor trucks, and the officers in charge of supplies and equipment lived in automobiles which had been fitted up like rooms. The supply and equipment departments had their own electric-lighting system and their separate wireless. This vast establishment could be mobilized in twenty-four hours, and its completeness, swiftness, efficiency, and punctuality were not only a triumph of modern industry, but were among the chief contributing causes for the Austro-German success in overpowering obstacles and difficulties, and for the fact that throughout the entire campaign in Russian Poland the troops never suffered lack of provisions and munitions.

The Russian retreat brought untold misery to the civil population of those parts of Russia which were affected by it. Especially true was this of those sections in which the Russian authorities decreed that the civil population had to become participants in the retreat and leave their homes and goods to the mercy of the invaders. The terrible suffering and misery resulting from these conditions will, perhaps, become more vivid from the following details taken from some Russian newspapers which will give an idea of the conditions: "In Moscow all railroad stations are overcrowded with refugees. Most of these are unable to leave the freight cars in which they had arrived because the tortures of hunger and thirst which they had to suffer during their trip had been too much for them. Thousands upon thousands of these unfortunate beings had been struck down by sickness, and as far as the capacity of the Moscow hospitals allowed had been cared for, while still other thousands had to be satisfied with accommodations in the open squares and streets of the city, while others were removed farther east in order to reduce the overcrowded conditions of the city. Every day some ten thousand refugees were sent east by way of Smolensk, Orel, and Tula. Among these were many thousands of German colonists who had formerly been residents of Cholm

and Volhynia, but had been removed from there by order of the Russian Government previous to the Russian retreat. The fate of all these hundreds of thousands of refugees by the time winter will have arrived will be horrible. What, for instance, will happen to about thirty thousand farmers from Galicia who were removed by force and now are located in a concentration camp on the River Slucz with nothing over their heads except the sky?"

From all parts of the Russian Empire involved in the German advance, streams of these unfortunate victims of war were continuously flowing toward the east. One of the chief reasons for the extensive misery which they had to suffer was the fact that the Russian organization, which even in times of peace does not work any too well, broke down completely under this unexpected and unparalleled demand on its resources. In spite of the fact that the larger number of these refugees were driven east by the special and express command of the Russian authorities, the latter had made no preparations to take care of them nor did they seem to show much worry concerning their fate. Even some of the high Government officials pointed out to the responsible Government departments that, as long as the Government had driven these unfortunate human beings away from their own homesteads without, in most cases, giving them time to gather in even their most necessary belongings, it had become the Government's duty to provide for them elsewhere in some fashion. If one considers that most of these people were without any resources whatsoever, and that the housing and feeding of such vast masses demanded the expenditure of large sums of money, which apparently were not available, it will easily be understood that all these men, women, and children of all ages and conditions suffered not only untold inconveniences, but actually the pangs of hunger and thirst, which in a great many instances resulted in the outbreak of epidemics and in the decimation of whole camps.

How a civilian observer was struck by some of the conditions in Poland may be gleaned from a description in one of the German monthly magazines rendered by an artist who accompanied

one of the German armies on its invasion of Poland: "Of course the first thing one learns to know is the horrible condition of roads in Russia. . . . One of the other main difficulties is the lack of cleanliness which results in so many epidemics among the population. These two conditions presented serious problems to the invading army; for, of course, it became necessary to remove the difficulties arising from them as much as possible. . . .

"The water supply also is of the worst on the eastern front, and when I wandered in the great summer heat through the trenches or drove by the hour with wagon and horse through the sandy wastes of Poland, I could not help but think of the many occasions when the fighting armies, in spite of all fatigue and hardships, had to go without drinking water of any kind whatsoever. . . ."

One of the greatest successes which the Germans gained in the summer of 1915 was the taking of the fortress of Kovno. Indeed it was the fall of this Russian bulwark as much as anything else that precipitated most of the Russian losses after the fall of Warsaw. Considering the importance of Kovno the following report of a special correspondent of the "Berliner Tageblatt," who was present during its bombardment, will be of interest. He says:

"The bombardment had reached a strength which made one believe that he was present at a concert in the lower regions. Guns of every variety and caliber, up to the largest, had been concentrated here and attempted to outroar each other. In unceasing activity the batteries spit their devastating sheaths of fire against the Russian forts and against the fortified positions which had been thrown up by the Russians between the forts and which had been supplied by them with very strong artillery. The latter did its best to keep up with the efforts of the besieging army. Day by day the Russian guns began firing against the German lines almost as soon as the German lines had opened their fire and the combination swelled the noise to a terrible height.

"Exactly at seven o'clock in the evening the German guns paused for a while in order to permit their infantry to advance.

This was an almost daily occurrence and day by day the German lines drew nearer to the Russian forts.

"Hardly had the fire of the German guns stopped when a furious crackling of rifle fire would begin. The German lines had left their trenches and were advancing against the Russian position from which they received heavy fire. Machine guns, too, joined the uproar. It was impossible to follow the infantry attack in detail, but its success could be gleaned from the fact that the German gun fire, which gradually was taken up again, had to be advanced in the direction of the fortress."

This fortress of Kovno, for which the Germans were making such a tremendous drive and which the Russians tried to hold with all the resources at their command, occupies in respect to the Niemen line the same position which the fortress of Lomza occupies in respect to the Nareff line, only in a much greater measure. And, indeed, the city is specially adapted by its entire location to act as protector of this important river. Between steep banks, which rise as high as 200 feet, the stream rushes along here, surrounding the city picturesquely with its heights and protecting it at the same time from attack. There Kovno is situated where the Vilia joins the Niemen, and only a short distance down the latter the Nieviaza adds its waters, so that Kovno forms a natural center of a number of extensive valleys which join here. It is upon these natural conditions of its situation that the unusual importance rests which Kovno has occupied for centuries in a historical, economical, and military respect in the history of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia.

Founded in the eleventh century, it belonged from 1384 to 1398 to the Order of the German Knights, who made a military point of the first order out of it. In 1400 the Grand Duke of Lithuania attacked and captured the town. The height of its career was reached in 1581, when it was raised to the center of the export trade and received a custom house. The commerce of the city at that time reached annually the sum of three million ducats, an immense amount for that period. The Russian czars, therefore, attempted at various times to capture the rich city, but it was not until the third partition of Poland in

1795 that Kovno became definitely a possession of the Russian Empire.

After that Kovno suffered many reverses. In 1806 a disastrous fire broke out and destroyed three-fourths of the city, but in spite of this disaster and others which followed, the city recovered and gained a certain importance in a political way, when in 1842 it was made the capital of the newly created government of Kovno. From then on the trade of the city grew in bounds and leaps, and it became a center of the trading to and from Prussia. Its industries, too, were developed extensively. Seven fortifications are situated to the south of the city, three more protect the road to Vilna, and one the bridge across the Vilia.

During the series of engagements near Dvinsk, in the fall of 1915, especially severe fighting occurred on the shores of Lake Sventen. The colonel of a Russian regiment which participated in these engagements gave the following vivid description to a staff correspondent of the London "Times":

"We had to secure a lodgment on the promontory nicknamed by our men the 'Dog's Tail.' My scouts crossed the lake at night, dug themselves in and annoyed the enemy holding the brickyard, situated upon a slight eminence at the northern part of the promontory. A Lettish officer commanded the scouts and organized the whole landing. Being a native of the place, he was able to take advantage of every latent resource afforded by the country. Thus he managed to discover a small fleet of boats, and added to them by constructing a number of rafts. During the night our men gradually reenforced the scouts. On the following day we rushed the brickyard. This gave us a larger foothold to deploy one of our regiments, and storm what we called 'Bald Hill,' while another regiment gave its attention to 'Red Hill,' to the southwest.

"Our advance was very slow. The Germans had a large number of Maxims, three times as many as we had, also automatic rifles, and freely used explosive bullets. But on our side we had our artillery massed in several lines east of Sventen and Medum, including field and heavy guns under good control, so that we

could pour in direct or flanking fire at will. Three days passed chiefly in artillery preparation for our final attack. The infantry advanced slightly. Our artillery observers were in the trenches correcting the fire of our guns. On November 3, 1915, the enemy began to pour in a fierce flanking fire from their guns west of Ilsen.

"When the scouts and supports moved from the 'Dog's Tail' promontory, our neighboring corps began to advance also, and we finally extended our right flank and gained direct contact. But all this time we were suffering heavily from the enemy's Maxims on the heights.

" 'Bald Hill' and 'Red Hill' were won on the third day. The enemy counterattacked and retook the first named heights. Our position was now a critical one. The waters of the lake in our rear cut off all hope of immediate reenforcements or of eventual retreat. We had to retake 'Bald Hill' at all costs, and we did it. My men were tremendously encouraged by the hurricane fire kept up by our artillery. Many of them had witnessed the terrible effects of the German hurricane fire. For the first time they saw that our own artillery was not only equal but even superior to anything the Germans could do. Our gunners telephoned asking me when they should stop, so that our men should not suffer from their fire. It seemed to me that our shells were bursting perilously near, and I asked them to cease fire. A half company then attacking 'Bald Hill' was immediately mown down by the German machine guns. I at once signaled to the gunners 'keep on firing' and only when our skirmishers were within 250 paces of the German trenches the hurricane was suspended and we went for the Germans with the bayonet, but they did not wait."

Many of the successes gained—both by the Russians in their retreat and by the Germans in their advance—were due to the effective work of the aviation corps. Scouting and bomb dropping were daily occurrences. A picturesque description of such a trip made by an aeroplane "somewhere in Poland" is taken from "Motor" and gives a very clear idea of the dangers to which pilot and observer are subjected at all times as well as of the practical results of their work:

"The departure had been set for nine o'clock in the morning and, while the pilot has already taken his place in the aeroplane and is trying out his motor, his companion comes out of his tent. The latter wears a wide brown leather coat, a storm cap is drawn deep down over his forehead, a long shawl covers his throat and in order to protect himself against the oil which the motor puffs out during the flight he has covered his eyes with big spectacles. A sergeant with some soldiers carry bombs to the aeroplane and pack them carefully next to the seat of the observer. The latter takes his seat, the motor starts, the propeller turns around quicker and quicker, and at last the pilot waves his arm—the wedges are withdrawn from under the wheels. The plane begins to roll along, lifts itself up from the ground and mounts in elegant spirals higher and higher; smaller and smaller appear men and houses; at last the aerostat shows 3,000 feet; the observer gives a sign and the plane turns in the direction of the enemy. It is comparatively easy to find the way: the railroad tracks which run toward the lines of the enemy serve as a guide; the aeroplane follows them above villages chopped into ruins by gunfire, whose houses look like small toy boxes. Suddenly, dark lines appear which run toward the west: trenches of the enemy which unroll themselves to the observer as if they were on a map. And right away small white clouds arise, the first greetings which the enemy fires toward the aeroplane, but under which the latter rushes by descending quickly.

"At last the trench zone has been crossed; the country in back of it appears to be strewn with pits and funnels caused by the explosion of big caliber shells. Here and there destroyed villages are to be seen from which dark pillars of smoke arise. Then the first roadway about which information is to be gathered appears. Peacefully it lies in the sunlight. Farther toward the west, however, the street becomes more lively; but the black specks which move down there are only a few automobiles which most likely carry some members of the general staff of the enemy and offer nothing worth while observing. But a little farther back a dark line and many small specks appear—detachments on the march. The observer leans over his map, compares, looks down once

more, then marks the observation on his map and the time at which it was made, and on goes the journey. In the streets of a larger place, which is reached soon afterward, a crowd of people are observed; in front of a church are standing at regular distances a number of wagons, a short wagon in front and back of it shapes that look like a frame—cannon. The observer continues to make marks on his map and at the same time a sharp sound is heard at his side and in the upper plane a slash appears. He waves his hand and the pilot sharply turns to the left. The observer reaches for a bomb and holds it over the edge of the aeroplane, drops it, and immediately afterward a flash appears among the cannon and the crowd on the market place disperses in wild flight. Another wave of the hand, another turn to the left, another bomb. The result is satisfactory; at least one cannon has been destroyed. But now it begins to become unpleasant; to the right and to the left, in front and in back, small white clouds arise; down there the bombardment has begun and it must make quite a loud noise which, however, is drowned in the noise of the motor. The pilot stops the motor and silently and gently the aeroplane descends into less dangerous heights; then the motor again begins to work and the aeroplane quickly turns its course toward the southwest following the white band of the country road.

"Suddenly white wisps of smoke arise over the tree tops of a near-by forest; again the observer makes some entries and, while the aeroplane rushes furiously forward, marks down with his pencil one body of troops after another. Above a freight station another stop is made; on the platforms of its storehouses men rush along busily. Their work will have to be disturbed: a motion of the hand, a pull on the motor which starts the descent, a grasp for the third bomb—and a railway guardhouse collapses into itself. The last bomb hits its mark even better; it explodes right in the middle between two cars without, however, hurting anybody; for the workmen have run away as quickly as their feet will carry them; pillars of fire roar up high; gasoline or coal oil supplies apparently have been hit. To determine this definitely is impossible, for the aeroplane must rush on. After

a short time, its commission executed, it turns back toward the east; the batteries which had been observed a short while ago and the lines of trenches are again passed and at last the tents of the hangar come into view; the cross, showing the place for landing, becomes visible; the descent begins; the wheels touch the ground with a sharp jolt; the observer jumps out of his seat and runs up to his commander to make his report."

CHAPTER XXV

WINTER ON THE EASTERN FRONT

BY the end of November, 1915, winter had set in along the eastern front. Especially along the northern part of the eastern line this necessitated almost a complete stoppage of operations. For there the weather becomes very severe. The ground freezes sometimes to a depth of three and more feet, which, of course, makes it impossible to dig trenches quickly. But just as soon as trench digging at short notice became impossible operations had to cease. For whenever armies advance over closely contested ground—as was the case all along the eastern line—the advance by necessity is slow, possibly over only a few miles every day. And every time the line is pushed forward, and trenches previously occupied are left behind, it becomes necessary with each step of the advance to dig new trenches unless the advanced line was fortunate enough to be able to stop the day's work in the trenches of the enemy, a possibility which, of course, did not offer itself any too frequently. And even then a lot of digging was necessary, because what was previously, during the enemy's occupation, the back of a trench line now had to be turned into its front. All of this digging, or at least most of it, had to be done quickly, in order to avoid the loss of the newly gained positions by the success of hostile counterattacks. But both sides alike found it impossible to dig quickly, or, for that matter, in most cases to dig at all

when the ground was frozen solid. So both sides found themselves condemned to a more or less continuous state of inactivity as far as all war operations were concerned, excepting only artillery duels, mining, aeroplane attacks, sniping from each other's trenches, and all those other more or less insignificant operations that are usually called by the generic term "trench warfare."

Although the Russians were acknowledged masters of trench digging and of throwing up well-planned and efficiently defended field fortifications of every kind, and also the great mass of their soldiers were much more accustomed to severe winters than the German forces, because a very much larger part of the Russian than of the German Empire is subject to very low winter temperatures, still the Germans, all in all, had the advantage over their adversaries under these conditions. In the first place the percentage of mechanically and scientifically trained men in the German army is far greater than that in the Russian army, because the latter is recruited primarily from an agricultural population, whereas the former draws its largest numbers from an intensively industrial body. Furthermore, organization within and without the army had been developed to a far higher degree by the Germans than by their eastern neighbors. It is, therefore, not at all surprising to hear of the marvelous preparations that the Germans had made for the approaching winter, and, inasmuch as most of this information is gathered from Russian sources, there can be little doubt of its correctness.

Down below in their trenches, covering the walls of their dugouts, the Germans had erected light metal buildings. These had been manufactured back in Germany in immense quantities in simple, standardized parts. Easily shipped in a "knockdown" condition, they were just as easily put up and put together, and all of them were fitted with heating apparatus of some kind. Warm clothing of every kind and description had either been manufactured at the Government's expense or had been collected from private sources throughout the empire by appealing to the nation at large by means of the newspapers. Although the statement, frequently heard, that each man had a sleeping sack un-

doubtedly was vastly exaggerated, vast quantities of these useful articles had been distributed. Then, too, officers, from captains down, gave their men detailed instructions and orders how to protect themselves efficiently against severe cold, and how to treat promptly and effectively any of the many ailments that are apt to afflict people unused to very low temperatures in a rather moist region, from frostbite down to colds.

From every possible line of human enterprise the Germans, according to Russian reports, apparently tried to learn lessons which might become applicable in these near-arctic conditions on the east front. Having been taught by the previous winter's experience the impossibility of trench digging, they promptly organized extensive mining detachments among their engineering troops, augmenting the latter in great quantities by soldiers from other branches of their general service who, from their experiences in times of peace, had become particularly adaptable to such work. These mining troops, later on in the winter, were to creep forward under the protection of night's shadows and blast with dynamite those trenches that were absolutely essential for cover of advancing troops and that could not be dug in the frozen ground with more simple tools. Long before this, however, while winter had not yet shown its full severity, these troops were busily occupied with the preparation of land mines, which were to act as substitutes for barbed-wire entanglements when freezing snow, piling up many feet high, rendered the latter useless. Previous experience, too, had taught that, when such weather conditions arose, the immense quantities of snow that fall in these regions not only completely covered barbed-wire entanglements, but as repeated snowstorms thickened the mass day by day, and sleet and thaw, caused by an occasional hour's sunshine, hardened it, made it even possible for the enemy's forces to advance securely on it in spite of, and on the very top of, all barbed-wire obstacles.

Throughout the first winter of the war the Germans had also used ski detachments. Most of these were employed in the mountainous regions of the western front. But small troops had been sent to East Prussia and had proven themselves very valu-

able there. Again and again Russian troops, attempting operations on ground covered with two or three days' snowfall, had sunk to their waists and chests into the snow and had become easy prey to attacks made by German soldiers on skis. So the Germans early in the fall, when certain parts of south Germany and Austria, covered with high mountains, lend themselves admirably for ski practice, had sent time after time detachments of carefully selected infantry troops to these regions and had made ski experts out of them. Sledges too—large and small—had been provided in quantities, because they had proven their value as means of transporting men and supplies where all other means had failed absolutely.

With the approach of real winter all these comparatively new features of warfare were put to use. Of course the Germans were by no means the only ones to profit from past experience and from the modern advance of the sciences and mechanical industries. But from all reports it is clear that they outdid the Russians in inventiveness as well as in the thoroughness and extent of their preparations.

"Jack Frost" also definitely stopped regular fighting. With its arrival war at the eastern front deteriorated into more or less of a guerrilla war. Instead of attempts to break through the line by miles, both sides settled down to a bitter contest for choice pieces of ground here and there. An exchange of a bit of high ground for a nasty, damp trench in a bog was considered quite a victory. The capture of a small supply train by a small detachment that had managed to sneak through the line at some point unobserved or unoccupied, because it apparently was impossible for occupation on account of the nature of the ground, was as much talked about as only a victory in a real engagement would have been two or three months ago. In a way, both the Russian and German and Austro-Hungarian armies had a much more severe time of it on the east front than the German and Franco-English forces had at the west front. First of all, the latter was located in much more civilized regions, cleaner, therefore, and healthier. Then, too, the nature of the ground in the west was less hard on the fighters, higher in most places, and,

therefore, drier. Furthermore, the western line was practically an unbroken line from the English Channel down to the Swiss border. In the east, however, marshes, lakes, and rivers made an unbroken line impossible. All along the front there were innumerable gaps. Of course many of these were gaps because no human being could find a foothold on them, and, therefore, needed no watching. Others, however, while impossible for occupation, were not equally impossible for passage, provided those that attempted to pass were willing to take great risks. And there was no lack of such on either side. So Russians, Germans, and Austro-Hungarians had to be continuously on the jump to prevent such raids of their lines which, though they might have been very small in the beginning, might have had very serious consequences. These conditions, therefore, made war on the east front for everybody concerned truly a war of attrition, equally racking for nerves and bodies.

Only one other event of importance occurred on the east front during the winter of 1915-16. General Russky, commanding the Russian forces fighting before Riga and Dvinsk and in the Dvina-Vilia sector, was forced by illness to retire from his command. He was succeeded by General Everth, who up to then had commanded the next adjoining army group, from the Vilia down to the Pripet Marshes, and who now assumed command over all the Russian forces from the Gulf of Riga to the Pripet Marshes. Farther down the line General Ivanoff continued the leadership that he had assumed after the German advance had come to a standstill at the end of October.

Thus the winter passed. As we have learned in some of the preceding chapters, operations were resumed in a small way at certain points along the line from time to time. With the approach of the spring of 1916 these activities slightly increased in extent and severity. But both sides, as long as frost continued, were satisfied with this state of conditions and with never-ceasing preparations for new offensive operations to begin as soon as nature would permit.

PART IV—THE BALKANS

CHAPTER XXVI

BATTLE CLOUDS GATHER AGAIN

THOUGH Serbia had been the first to be attacked by the Central Powers when the world war began, the end of the first year's fighting was to find her still unconquered, though she had passed through ordeals quite as severe as those suffered by Belgium.

Let us review, briefly, the events of the first year:

Hardly had hostilities been declared by Austria-Hungary, on July 28, 1914, when the armies of the Dual Empire began gathering along the Serbian frontiers; then, within a few days, they hurled themselves into Serbia, hoping to overwhelm her by the sheer weight of their numbers. Not only did the soldiers of the little Balkan nation withstand the onslaught of the imperial troops, but within the week they had swept them back, driving them across the frontiers.

So astounded was the Austrian General Staff, so dumfounded was it by this unexpected disaster, that it required some weeks to realize what had happened, and to prepare for a second and mightier attempt to overcome the resistance of the Serbians.

On came the Austrians again, only to suffer a second defeat. Then they made their third and mightiest effort, and this time every available resource of the empire was strained to the utmost; every soldier not absolutely needed elsewhere was utilized. And this time, indeed, the Austrian forces did penetrate some distance within Serbian territory, and for over a fortnight the Serbian

capital was theirs. But their initial success only made their final defeat the more complete. For the third time the Serbian soldiers beat them back, and from that date, December 14, 1914, Serbia remained undisturbed by foreign invasion for almost a year.

Shortly after the beginning of the New Year, came an enemy for whom the Serbians were not so well prepared: a typhus epidemic, which took almost as many victims as had the fighting. Realizing their helplessness, the Serbians uttered an appeal for help, and almost every nation, not an enemy, including the United States, responded generously with money, and by sending Red Cross corps to nurse the plague victims. By the summer of 1915, the epidemic had spent itself, after decimating the army and the civil population.

Meanwhile a danger threatened the Serbians which overshadowed even that from the Austrians; namely the danger that other Balkan nations, and especially Bulgaria, might join the Teutonic Powers. Serbia had already shown that she could take care of the Austrians alone, but with Bulgaria attacking her flank, even the most optimistic realized that the fight against such odds probably would be hopeless.

Turkey, even while Serbia was hurling back the Austrians for the second time, in November, 1914, was the first to declare herself in favor of the Teutons by attacking the Russians. Then began the game of diplomacy to win over the Christian states to the Allies. All had declared themselves neutral, even Greece, though she was bound by a treaty to assist Serbia against foreign attack. But it was generally realized that each was only watching for the first signs of weakness on either side before deciding which to support. To give weight to her diplomacy Great Britain began her military operations on Gallipoli, on the understanding with Greece, of which Venizelos was then premier, that Greek troops should assist. But Venizelos was forced to resign by the Greek King and the governing clique, and Greece continued to maintain her neutrality.

Rumania, in spite of her leanings toward the Allies, remained firm in her neutrality. Bulgaria was more explicit; she made it

understood that she would join that side which could most effectually guarantee her possession of the territory in Macedonia which she considered she had won in the First Balkan War and which was given over to Serbia and Greece after the Second Balkan War by the Treaty of Bucharest. Throughout the year the negotiations continued whereby the Allies attempted to persuade Greece and Serbia to agree to Bulgaria's terms, but Greece continued obdurate in her determination to hold all she had, and Serbia yielded only in part, and very reluctantly. In August, 1915, beginning the second year of the war, these negotiations were still in progress. As it was still unknown publicly that Bulgaria had already signed a secret alliance with Germany, the situation was considered favorable to the Allies, especially as on August 22, 1915, it was announced that Venizelos was again to become prime minister of Greece.

The first indication that King Ferdinand and his cabinet had come to a decision was in the agitation that appeared in Bulgaria itself among the leaders of the opposition parties, protesting against the Germanophile policy of the Government. On September 18, 1915, a deputation of these leaders had an interview with the king, in which they made their protest; the report was that a stormy scene occurred, in which several members of the deputation used language to the effect that should the king go against the popular feeling, which was in favor of the Entente, it would cost him his throne. They also demanded that the National Assembly be convened.

The king's reply was to order a general order of mobilization of the Bulgarian army. At the same time a note was issued to all foreign representatives in which the Government stated explicitly that Bulgaria had no intention of entering the war; that she had called her men to the colors only to maintain an "armed neutrality," as Holland and Switzerland were doing. In spite of these assurances, Greece also began mobilizing. On September 20, 1915, there appeared a significant statement in the German official report of military operations, to the effect that German artillery, stationed on the Danube opposite Semendria, had opened fire on a Serbian position. Never before had there been

mention of German guns so far south. Altogether, the situation in the Balkans was now becoming acute.

On September 28, 1915, Sir Edward Grey made a statement in the British Parliament which made the world realize that a crisis in the Balkans was imminent. He announced that efforts were still being made to arrange an agreement between Bulgaria and Serbia and Greece regarding Macedonia, "but," he added significantly, "if Bulgaria assumes an aggressive attitude on the side of our enemies, we will support our friends in the Balkans with all our power, in concert with our Allies and without reserve or qualification."

This was followed up by another statement on October 1, 1915, to the effect that German and Austrian officers were arriving in the Bulgarian capital, creating a situation of "the utmost gravity." Within forty-eight hours, Russia issued an ultimatum to Bulgaria demanding that the German and Austrian officers in Sofia be removed within twenty-four hours, otherwise Russia would sever all diplomatic relations with King Ferdinand's Government. To this Bulgaria made no immediate reply, with the result that the Russian Minister left Sofia the next day. Premier Radoslavov, however, on the same day, published an official statement that there were no German or Austrian officers in Sofia and that Bulgaria had no intention of breaking her neutrality. Meanwhile came reports through Greece stating that Bulgarian troops were being massed up against the Serbian frontier. As subsequent events soon proved, Bulgaria was determined to hide her real purpose to the last moment; not until she actually made her first attack did she cease denying her hostile intentions.

That Bulgaria was acting in cooperation with the Teutonic allies was obvious, for already the Serbians had observed that great forces were being mobilized across the rivers, along her northern and northwestern frontiers, along the banks of the Danube, the Save, and the Drina.

What did not develop so soon was the fact that this new invasion was to be under the leadership of the German General von Mackensen, and that the invaders were to consist in large part of German regiments. During the summer Mackensen had

been engaged in directing a strong Austro-German offensive against the Russians, with conspicuous success. For weeks after he had left this front and was busy organizing a similar offensive against the Serbians, the German official dispatches continued to associate his name with actions on the Russian front that the preparations in the south might continue secret as long as possible.

Not long after the first Austro-German guns began hurling their shells across the Danube, against the Serbian position at Semendria, the Serbians learned of the disposition and the resources of the enemy. The troops under Mackensen were divided into two armies, each in close contact with the other. One of these wings was under the command of a German, General von Gallwitz, who had distinguished himself against the Russians a short time previously. The men under him were entirely Germans. The other army was under the command of an Austrian, General von Kövess von Kövesshaza. His men were both German and Austrian, the latter predominating.

The army under Gallwitz extended from Orsova, near the Rumanian frontier, along the Danube westward to a point opposite Semendria. Here his right flank joined Kövess's line, which extended up past Belgrade, along the Save and part way up the Drina. The rest of the frontier up the Drina was covered by a smaller Austrian army.

Altogether, the Austro-German armies comprised at least 300,000 men. The Austrians were picked troops, for it was only natural that the general staff wished to retrieve, in some measure, the humiliation of the previous year. The Germans, numbering fully half of the total force, were also hardened veterans, who had seen plenty of fighting on the Russian front or in France or Flanders.

Mackensen's overwhelming success in driving the Russians out of Galicia had been mainly due to his artillery, that arm of the military service in which the Germans excelled all their enemies. And here, too, the artillery was to play an important part, for fully 2,000 cannon, nearly all of mid-caliber and heavy caliber, had been brought down against the Serbians. During the first

three invasions the Austrians had thrown their infantry up against the Serbian lines. Now German tactics were to be tried: the Serbian trenches and other defensive positions were to be pulverized with powerful explosives, then rushed with infantry.

Though they had been undisturbed for so long, the Serbians were by no means in doubt as to what was yet to come. They had realized that eventually the enemy would return more determined and more powerful than ever. Therefore, they had spent the nine months since the last defeat of the Austrians in extensive preparations. Line after line of trenches had been built back into the interior of the country, and all the possible crossings on the rivers had been heavily fortified. Moreover, they had drained the civilian population of every male person strong enough to carry a gun.

At this time, when the fourth invasion began threatening, their army mustered fully 310,000 men, slightly more than the Austro-German. In regard to small arms and ammunition they were also at least equal to the enemy, for vast consignments of military stores had been sent into the country by the Allies. Only in heavy artillery were they inferior, but then this was also true of all the armies facing the Germans throughout Europe.

Therefore, had the Serbians been called upon to defend themselves only against General von Mackensen's armies, it is highly probable that they would have been able to give the same answer as they had the year previous. So probable, in fact, that Mackensen would hardly dared to have attacked them with only 300,000 men. To be sure, their enemy was no longer made up of raw recruits and there was now the heavy artillery as well as a commander of great ability to face, but the preparations they had made in defensive works, as well as the mountainous nature of their country, more than made up for these advantages possessed by their opponents. It was the Bulgarians who would turn the scale.

Because of the greed for territory of their governing clique, the Serbians now faced dangers which even their rugged qualities could not contend against long. For now, while they were

steeling themselves to meet the impact of the blow from the Austro-Germans from the north, the Bulgarian army, fully as strong as themselves, was gathering on their right flank. In spite of the diplomatic protests of Ferdinand and Radoslavov, the Serbians were not deceived.

The danger from the Bulgarian army meant more to the Serbians than the mere doubling in number of their enemy's forces. It was the position of the Bulgarians which made the situation especially precarious, impossible.

A glance at the map will show that the main line of railroad, running down from Belgrade to Saloniki by way of Nish, passes within a few miles of the Bulgarian frontier, just opposite Sofia. Indeed, from Klisura on the frontier the distant whistle of the locomotives and the rattle of the trains across stretches of trestle work can be heard plainly on still days. From Klisura on the frontier to the railroad is all down hill. Farther south, at Kustendil, the danger was even greater, though the distance from frontier to railroad somewhat more, for at Kustendil was the terminus of a short railroad from the Bulgarian capital. From this point on the frontier toward the railroad at Kumanova the terrain was all in favor of the Bulgarians, for Kustendil is at the top of a chain of mountains and the railroad runs along the bottom of a valley, the famous Morava Valley.

This railroad, from Upper Serbia down to Saloniki, was the only line of communication and transportation between the main Serbian armies and the Allies. Cut this, and they would wither like a flower separated from its stem.

So keenly did the Serbians realize their danger that they asked permission of the Allies to attack Bulgaria before the Bulgarian army was completely mobilized. They hoped thereby to disable Bulgaria with one sharp blow while she was not yet prepared, then turn their whole attention toward the enemy in the north. But to this plan the Allies would not consent, still hoping that Ferdinand would reconsider his resolution.

Just before the fourth invasion actually began, the Serbians held their frontier along the Danube and the Save with three armies, consisting of nearly eight divisions, or half of all their

GENERAL MAP OF BALKAN (SERBIAN) OPERATIONS

available men. On the west the First Serbian Army, of three divisions, commanded by General Mishitch, occupied the angle formed by the Save and the Drina, with its headquarters at Shabatz, the scene of such bloody fighting a year before. To the eastward came a force of a division and a half under command of General Zivkovitch, known as the Army for the Defense of Belgrade, which indicates its position. Between Belgrade and the Rumanian frontier lay the Third Serbian Army, of three divisions, with General Jourishitch at its head, protecting the mouth of the Morava Valley.

Facing the Austrians over in the west, in the vicinity of Vichegrad, was the army of Ushitze, of less than two divisions, under General Goykovitch.

These were the forces, about two-thirds of the total Serbian army, which faced the Austro-Germans. But another 100,000 had also to be deployed along the Bulgarian frontier to protect the railroad as best they could. Thus it was that wherever she faced her enemies, Serbia was hopelessly outnumbered.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE INVASION BEGINS

AS already stated, the first of Mackensen's huge shells began bursting over the Serbian defenses across the river on September 20, 1915. While the wheels of diplomacy continued turning during the following weeks, the roar of the big guns grew louder and more persistent and swept up and down the long line. Then came several attempts on the part of the Austro-Germans to cross the rivers; all these the Serbians successfully repulsed, though they may have been mere feints, as a boxer jabs at his opponent's jaw while he really aims for his wind. There were seven of these attempts. In one, near Semendria, the Serbians reported that a whole battalion of an enemy was destroyed. Meanwhile German aeroplanes whirred back and

forth over the Serbian lines, reconnoitering their positions and sometimes dropping bombs. One of them flew south as far as Nish, then turned eastward and disappeared over the mountain ridges toward Bulgaria. And all this while the frontier guards reported that the Bulgarians were massing their troops day by day.

As already noted, the Serbian frontier in Macedonia was left practically unguarded. Possibly the Serbians still hoped the Greeks would hold to their treaty and join them from that direction. And, indeed, the Greek army was being mobilized, frankly to meet the Bulgarians. More encouraging still, the news came that France and England, at the request of Venizelos, had agreed to send to Saloniki 150,000 men to make up for an equal number which, by the terms of the Serbo-Greek treaty for mutual defense against Bulgaria, Serbia would have provided had she been able to do so.

This force began landing in Saloniki on October 5, 1915, but on the same day Venizelos was again compelled to resign by King Constantine, who was determined to keep the Greek nation out of the war. This was a sad blow to the hopes of the Serbians. Still, the British and French troops continued landing, in spite of the "protest" from the Greek Government.

Beginning on October 3, 1915, the fire of the Austro-German artillery became doubly insistent, thundering up and down the whole front with increasing vigor. Again the Teutons began poking their pontoons out into the river, and again they were smashed by the Serbian guns. The fighting waxed hottest at Ram, Dubrovitza, and Semendria, on the Danube, and in and about Ciganlia Island (Island of the Gypsies), at Obrenovatz, Shabatz, and Jarak on the Save, where it is joined by the Drina. Ram and Semendria, both fortified places, guarded the mouth of the Morava Valley, and these Gallwitz subjected to an especially heavy fire. By October 5, 1915, the shelling became heaviest in this sector: the enemy's guns and howitzers belched forth a steady hail of big shells.

Belgrade, also, became the object of an increasingly tremendous effort on the part of the Austro-German artillery. Here

they had brought up long-range guns, and with these inflicted heavy damage.

Nevertheless, the Serbians in Belgrade gave a good account of themselves. There were stationed there the big naval guns, 4.7-inch and 6-inch, sent into the country by Great Britain, France, and Russia, and served by their expert gunners. For several days the foreign gunners, under command of Rear Admiral Troubridge, swept the broad surface of the Danube and the Save, sinking two of the enemy's gunboats that happened to come within range.

On October 5, 1915, the German fire on Belgrade intensified and became terrific. They no longer satisfied themselves with pouring their deadly fire on the fortress of Belgrade and the neighboring positions at Zamar, but they began a systematic bombardment of the city itself, hurling vast quantities of inflammatory bombs, as though they meant to burn down every building before attempting to take it. Into the suburbs beyond, through which ran the highways leading into the interior, they rained a curtain of fire which made flight for the inhabitants almost impossible.

On October 6, 1915, the Austro-German forces finally managed to effect a crossing which the Serbians were not able to repulse; at several points they landed on the opposite bank, including Belgrade itself. The first attempts had been made at Jarak, Podgorska Island, and Zabrez, and had been driven back again and again, but this time the enemy put such energy behind his efforts that eventually the Serbians were no longer able to drive him back. Gypsy Island, too, a short distance from Belgrade, was captured, whence a landing was made under the Lower Fortress and on the Danube Quay in the city itself. In the first attempt all the Austrians or Germans who landed under the Lower Fortress were either killed or captured. Finally the invaders established themselves permanently on the quay. During that day the fighting was of a bloodier character than had as yet taken place.

Next day, October 7, 1915, the Austro-Germans pushed on to further success; their big guns raked the river shore up and

down and tore down all defensive works, making them untenable for the defenders. And on the day following, October 8, 1915, the Austro-Hungarian troops of Kövess penetrated into the northern sections of the city, taking the citadel by storm. At the same time a German contingent, attached to Kövess's command, landed west of the city and took the heights in that section, fighting its way to the Konak and finally to the Royal Palace, in the center of the city, over which they hoisted the German and Austrian flags. Though there was still much to do, Belgrade was now practically in their hands.

Little by little the foreign naval guns in Belgrade had been silenced by the big shells of the German howitzers. In the afternoon General Zikovitch, seeing that the city was now lost and hoping to save it from complete destruction, ordered his forces to retire on the fortified positions lying behind and south of the capital. Several detachments of the defenders, however, had already been cut off and were obliged to remain. Some fought grimly to the bitter end, inflicting heavy losses on the invaders; others were obliged to surrender. In some of the streets the fighting took on a bloody, hand-to-hand character, in which some of the civilians took part. All through the night Mannlicher rifles sputtered back and forth, interspersed here and there with the deeper detonation of the hand bombs which the Serbians hurled in the skirmishes from street to street and from terrace to terrace. When morning dawned the last of the firing died down and the greater part of Belgrade was a vast field of charred timbers and tumbled-down stones.

Belgrade was taken, as the official German and Austrian reports announced joyously next day, but its taking had been at an enormous cost and, aside from the political value of its possession, with very little gain. The official list specified the war material captured as only 9 naval guns, and 26 unmounted field pieces, the prisoners amounting to 10 officers and 600 men, many of whom were wounded. The Serbian Government had been established in Nish since the beginning of the war.

What had happened at Belgrade was typical of the fighting at a number of other points along the banks of the three rivers. On

the same day that Belgrade was taken the Austro-Germans crossed the Danube between Gradishte and Semendria, near the village of Zatagna and the small fort called Kosolatz. Ram, too, after having been heavily bombarded, was taken. Then, from these points they tried to blast their way through farther south, away from the river into the interior, but the Serbians held them back from the neighboring heights.

In the west, on the Save, toward the mouth of the Drina, the invaders were not so successful. In this area were some of the best of the Serbian soldiers, among them the Shumadia Division, which especially distinguished itself during all the later fighting. Here Marshal Mishitch, who had led his men so ably during the third invasion ten months previously, was in command. He also had charge of the defenses along the lower Drina, and opposite Badovintse he drove back the Austrians with bloody slaughter.

Between Obrenovatz and Kratinska, on the Save, the Austro-Germans had delivered heavy attacks for three nights successively, but were effectively checked. The operations were directed specially against Zabrez. On October 10, 1915, this Serbian position was still holding out. In the afternoon of that date the Austrians bombarded heavily, using great quantities of asphyxiating bombs. Then they charged in solid masses, believing that the gases had thrown the Serbians into disorder. The latter, however, were provided with masks, and when the enemy charged they sprang from their trenches and met them on the open ground in hand-to-hand bayonet fighting, driving them back in panic.

Again the Austrians showered gas shells on the Serbians; then, toward dusk, came on again, but the Serbians once more broke through the Austrian ranks and captured many prisoners.

But in spite of these local successes by the Serbians, the fighting was beginning to go against them; the invaders had crossed the frontier and could no longer be dislodged. On October 11, 1915, the official German dispatches were able to announce that Mackensen's forces were in possession of the Serbian banks of the Danube and the Save between Gradishte and Shabatz, a stretch of over a hundred miles. On the Drina, too, the Aus-

THE BEGINNING OF THE GERMAN-AUSTRO-BULGAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST SERBIA

trians had been able to cross over in several places. To all these points they hurried large bodies of reserves to push their advantages and so continue a vigorous offensive east, south, and west of Belgrade, in a wide, sweeping movement along the entire front.

The main effort was made in the east, to secure possession of the Morava Valley and its railroad. Near Semendria, Gallwitz's right wing was in touch with Kövess's left. The plan was that they should advance up the Morava together, each covering one side of the valley. But it was first necessary to reduce the Serbian forts at Semendria and Pojarevatz.

It was now two weeks since the heavy artillery had begun playing on Semendria. By October 11, 1915, the invaders had succeeded in taking Semendria, the garrison retiring to Pojarevatz. Here a very severe battle was fought, but finally the Serbians were forced back, though not without inflicting the heaviest losses that the enemy had as yet suffered. After two days the fort was taken and the Serbians retired to the hills beyond. Thus the invaders were now ready to begin their advance down the Morava Valley.

But just then there came a pause in the fighting. The Serbians observed that Gallwitz waited. What he waited for was not immediately obvious to them. Within a few days they were to know.

CHAPTER XXVIII

BULGARIA ENTERS THE WAR

THE Bulgarian Government suddenly threw aside all dissimulation and declared war on Serbia, on the pretext that the Serbians had crossed the frontier and attacked Bulgarian troops. On October 11, 1915, the Bulgarian army began operations by attacking the Serbians at Kadibogas, northwest of Nish, the attack gradually extending up and down the frontier. This was

the fatal blow. To oppose the 300,000 men that the Bulgarians could easily put into this field, the Serbians had not over a third as many.

Bulgaria had two large armies against the Serbian frontier. The First Army, under General Boyadjieff, was fully 200,000 strong and was concentrated in the north from Vidin to Zaribrod, threatening the Timok Valley and that part of the Belgrade-Sofia railroad running from Pirot to Nish.

The Second Army, under the command of General Todoroff, was only half as large, and directed itself toward Macedonia and especially toward Uskub, both on account of the strategic importance of that place as a railroad center and as the best point from which a wedge might be driven into the side of Serbia, separating the north from the south. The headquarters of this second force was in Kustendil, its left wing extending down to Strumitza in Macedonia.

On this eastern front, to oppose the Bulgarians, the Serbian forces were in three groups. In the north, its left flank touching the forces operating against the Austro-Germans, lay the Timok group, commanded by General Zivkovitch, whose headquarters were in Zaichar. South of this force came the second group—territorial troops—numbering three divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, altogether about 80,000 men, and commanded by Marshal Stepanovitch. It was based on Pirot and was especially charged with the defense of the railroad. Lower down, with headquarters in Vranya, was the detachment of the Southern Morava. Farther down in Macedonia, concentrated around Uskub, Veles, and stretched down along the Vardar toward the Greek frontier at Doiran, were another 25,000 men under the command of General Bojovitch.

As a slight offset to the disheartening news that the Bulgarians had at last definitely joined hands with the Teutonic forces, came the tidings that France and England had declared war on Bulgaria and that their forces, which had been landing in Saloniki, were already advancing up the Vardar with the intention of making a junction with the southern Serbian forces. Already, on that same day, October 15, 1915, the allied vanguard had

advanced as far as Valandova and was there attacked by the Bulgarians, the latter being beaten back and heavily defeated. These were the French troops, under command of General Sarrail; having thrown back the Bulgarians he worked his way northward along the railroad until he reached Krivolak and Gradsko, a few miles below Veles. But transporting troops from France and England was a slow business, and General Sarrail had not then, nor had he later, enough forces to advance north any farther. Meanwhile the Bulgarians in the north, under Boyadjieff, began operations against the Serbians.

The country in this section is extremely rough, being all rocky ridges and deep ravines, with roads little better than mountain trails. Boyadjieff succeeded at once in crossing the Lower Timok, then divided his force into two main divisions. One of these he advanced against Pirot, the other against Zaichar and Kniashevatz. But now the Serbians began a strong resistance.

On October 15, 1915, the Bulgarians began three strong assaults, east and southeast of Zaichar, all of which the Serbians repulsed successfully. East of Kniashevatz another series of bitterly contested encounters took place, neither side making any decided gains. On the following day the fighting extended to Svinski Vis. By this time the Serbians east of Kniashevatz began giving way slowly and the Bulgarians pushed forward and on October 19, 1915, they arrived before Negotin. Toward Pirot they also succeeded in making some advance.

For several days the two fighting lines of men swayed back and forth. Here artillery played not so important a part. Both Bulgars and Serbs, primitive, rugged fighters, threw military science to the winds and plunged into the battle face to face and breast to breast, thrusting each other with cold steel. In some of the struggles the men lost their guns; they picked up the bowlders that lay about them thickly and hurled them at their enemies or they gripped each other with their hands and fought as animals fight. Quarter was neither asked nor given.

Witnesses state that in neither of the two Balkan wars was there such ferocious fighting, such awful slaughter, as during the encounters between the Serbians and Bulgarians along this sec-

tion of the frontier. Both sides lost heavily; whole companies and even battalions were hemmed in against the rock walls, then exterminated to the last man.

But finally numbers began to show the advantage, and the Serbians were obliged to retire from ridge to ridge. Village after village was taken and burned.

In Macedonia, Todoroff, though his force was much smaller, was having comparatively easy work. A large part of the vital railroad line passed through this section and it was Todoroff's first aim to throw himself astride of it, thus effectually breaking off communication between the vanguard of the French army and the Serbians. It was this portion of the country that the Greeks would have defended, had they joined the Allies.

The first thing that Todoroff did was to detach a strong force from his main body, with which he struck at the railroad between Vranya and Zibeftcha and succeeded in cutting it. The detachment of the Southern Morava was driven back at the first encounter and on October 17, 1915, the Bulgarians entered Vranya. On the same day the main body of the Bulgarians advanced down the slopes from Kustendil and took Egri Palanka, on the road toward Kumanova and Uskub. Farther south they penetrated the Valley of the Bregalnitza, the scene of the Bulgarian defeat in the Second Balkan War, where they captured the important strategic point, Sultan Tepe, and the town of Katshana, taking twelve field pieces. Passing rapidly on through Ishtip, they occupied that part of Veles lying east of the Vardar River, where, on October 20, 1915, they again cut the railroad line and so made any further advance on the part of the French almost impossible. The next day the Bulgarians captured Kumanova and then, on the day following, drove the Serbians on through Uskub. The Serbians retired fighting to Katshanik Pass, north of Uskub, where they made a stand that became one of the notable achievements, on their part, of the whole campaign. For by the defense of this pass they made the Bulgarian effort to cut Serbia in two for some time fruitless.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE TEUTONIC INVASION ROLLS ON

MEANWHILE, Bulgaria having plunged into the fighting, the Teutonic allies in the north resumed their efforts to advance southward. But for some time they had all they could do to maintain themselves on the banks of the rivers. Before them rose the rock-ribbed hills skirting the mountains of the interior, and along these hills the Serbians had, during the previous ten months, built up line after line of strong intrenchments, one behind the other. To carry one line was only to gain a few hundred yards of territory.

Just as soon as Kövess felt his hold on Belgrade secure, he began an attack on the heights to the south. After three days of intense bombardment he succeeded in taking Mount Avala, an eminence some 1,600 feet in height and ten miles from the city. On the same day, October 18, 1915, Obrenovatz fell into his hands, and Shabatz three days later. However, these two places were still only on the banks of the river.

The chief efforts of the invaders, however, were directed toward making an advance down the Morava Valley. Their first assault was made against the Serbian positions in the mountainous country of the Podunavlie. Gallwitz here had an exceedingly difficult task, for the ground rose in rocky, steplike formation, offering all the advantages to the defenders. But the bombardment from the heavy artillery had its effect and slowly the Germans advanced. By October 23, 1915, they had reached the southern bank of the Jesenitza, not far from Palanka and had passed Rakinatz on the road to Petrovatz on the Mlava.

During this same period the German left wing, having smashed Tekia with gunfire, crossed the Danube near Orsova and succeeded in taking the heights overlooking the river. On the extreme western front the Austrians crossed the Drina at Vishegrad. Thus all the rivers forming the frontiers had passed completely into the hands of the invaders. But it had been a costly

gain. By this time the Austro-German forces had lost very heavily. The Serbians also had had heavy losses, but not half so many as the enemy.

It was the policy of General Putnik, the Serbian Chief of Staff, to prolong the fighting as much as possible, for during this time the transports of the Allies were disembarking troops in Saloniki, at the rate af 5,000 men a day, and there was hope that eventually they would be able to advance northward, and at least save the Serbians from the Bulgarians. This same hope had stiffened the resistance of the soldiers in every skirmish. Then came word that the Russians would relieve the pressure by attacking the Bulgarians, either through Rumania, or by landing troops in either Bourgas or Varna. And once indeed the Russian ships did bombard Varna, but without any attempt at disembarking troops.

As the days passed and no help from outside came, the belief began gradually to dawn on the Serbian people that they were doomed as a nation. This feeling first manifested itself in the flight of the civil population. At first the noncombatants had merely retired with the fighting line. The first three invasions had shown that the Austrians did not always refrain from committing atrocities, especially when their armies had suffered unusually. Nor was there any reason to suppose that the Germans were any kindlier to civilians. Thus it was that hardly any of the civil population remained behind in conquered territory.

Then, gradually, came the conviction that Serbian soldiers alone must face the enemy, and even the most patriotic realized what a hopeless fight it was. The whole population began moving southward; along every available road trailed long lines of slowly moving ox carts, loaded with the few movable belongings of their peasant owners. South continued the exodus and then—the Bulgarians blocked the way. The roads to Greece were closed. There remained nothing for them to do but to turn toward the awful mountain wilderness intervening between them and the Adriatic sea coast, infested by fierce bands of Albanian brigands and tribesmen.

The weather was bad; rain fell heavily and incessantly, the roads were deep in mud and the plight of these people, most of

them old men and women and children, became intensely miserable.

The Austro-German lines in the north continued their slow but persistent southward advance; the invasion rolled on, the Serbians retiring before them step by step. During the last week of the month Gallwitz came to the heights east of Banitzina, south of Jesenitza, and began storming them. Then followed another spurt of severe fighting and Livaditza and Zabari, on the Morava River, fell into their hands, after which they occupied the region south of Petrovatz. By the 28th they had gained Svilajnatz, beating down the Serbian resistance by sheer weight of men and guns, and by the last day of the month they were within a day's march of Kragujevatz, in which was located Serbia's chief arsenal. Situated on the Lepenitza, a branch of the Morava, it lay about half way between Belgrade and Nish, on a branch line of the main railroad. It was a point well worth defending, and the Serbians did defend it stubbornly, but on November 1, 1915, they were compelled to evacuate it, after first destroying the arsenal and all the materials it contained.

It was here that the Shumadia Division especially distinguished itself. The regiments of that unit had been recruited in this section; it was literally defending its native soil. During the first part of the fighting it had been intrenched in the hills to the north of the town. The day was wet and dense mists rolled through the mountain passes down over the hills. The Germans had effectually shelled the positions of the Shumadians and were under the impression that they had retired, wherefore they advanced upward to occupy the deserted trenches.

And then, suddenly, wild yells and shouts burst out from the rolling mist and the Shumadians fell upon the invaders with set bayonets. The latter, who had been growing accustomed to the purely defensive tactics of their enemy, were completely taken by surprise and thrown into disorder.

The first line of the Teutons wavered, then broke and scattered. Coming up against reenforcements behind, they re-formed and advanced again. And again the Shumadians burst down on them and engaged them hand to hand. Fighting like savages, they

drove the invaders before them for a considerable distance, taking over 3,000 prisoners and several guns. When finally they retired just as the main body of the advancing foe was coming up, they left behind them hundreds of enemy dead, the fallen literally covering the ground in heaps.

The mixed forces of Kövess, keeping in touch with Gallwitz's right wing, had been advancing more or less in line with the Germans, marching along the railroad from Belgrade and Obrenovatz toward the Western Morava. South of Belgrade the Serbians had put up a stout resistance at Kosmai, but were finally dislodged by the heavy artillery fire. On October 25, 1915, Kövess arrived at Ratcha, south of Palanka, on the right side of the Morava. After a hard fought battle at Gorni Milanovatz, he reached Cacak on November 1, 1915, a few miles west of Kragujevatz. Here it was that he struck the Western Morava and the railroad passing along it eastward from Ushitze to its junction with the main line. Farther to the westward his cavalry, on October 26, 1915, had occupied Valievo on the Upper Kolubara and one of his divisions had crossed the Maljen Mountains, where the Austrians had been so humiliatingly defeated the year before. Farther west, but more to the south, the Austrians, who had pushed on from Vishegrad, arrived in Ushitze on November 2, 1915, and presently effected a junction with the main body.

Meanwhile, a day or two before the end of the month, an incident up in the northeast foreshadowed the attainment of the main objective of the Austro-German forces. The Serbians had, naturally, withdrawn from this section and now a German cavalry patrol, scouting in advance of its own lines, met with a body of Bulgarian scouts. The Bulgarian and the Teutonic forces had come in contact with each other. But the chief significance of this fact was that now the road was open for communication between Germany and Turkey. Even if the railroad running from Belgrade to Constantinople, by way of Sofia, should be temporarily cut, or should not be captured throughout its entire length for some time, shipments of war material could already be made to Turkey by way of the Danube down to Rustchuk in northern Bulgaria and thence by railroad. Thus the Turks at

Gallipoli, who had been running short of ammunition, could now be relieved.

This opening of communication with Turkey was made much of in the German official reports and some of the newspapers began referring to Mackensen's army as "the army of Egypt."

On the first day of November, 1915, Mackensen could really say that he had conquered all of northern Serbia. But the fact remained that the Serbian army was still in the field; not even a part of it had as yet been captured or annihilated. And it is a military axiom that no matter how far an army may retreat and no matter how much territory may have been conquered, no battle is decisive until the enemy has been destroyed, either entirely or in large part. The Germans were to be reminded of this fact more than once on the Russian front.

Up till this time Boyadjieff, at the head of his Bulgarian army, was attacking the Serbians from two directions: along the Timok against Kniashevatz, Zaichar, and Negotin, and along the Nishava against Pirot. Both movements were directed ultimately toward Nish, but the more northerly had also the purpose of effecting a junction with the left wing of the Germans under Gallwitz, which was advancing from Tekia, in the northeast corner of Serbia. Negotin and Prahovo, the latter a port on the Danube, had been taken on October 25, 1915. Lower down, the Bulgarians, who were in overwhelming strength, occupied both Zaichar and Kniashevatz on the 28th. Meanwhile, the Serbians were also compelled to abandon the commanding heights of Drenova Glava, fifteen miles northwest of Pirot, and on the 28th Pirot fell, though not without heavy fighting. With Pirot on the south and Kniashevatz on the north in the hands of the Bulgarians, the situation of Nish became very precarious. The Serbian Government was now shifted to Kralievo.

Down in Macedonia the Second Bulgarian Army, under Todoroff, seemed to have come to an end of its initial success. After its occupation of Uskub it had advanced to Katshanik Pass, which was occupied by the Serbians under General Bojovitch. Todoroff at once began a violent attack and by October 28, 1915, part of the defile seemed to have been cleared of the Serbians.

But presently the Serbians were reenforced by two regiments of the Morava Division and two of the Drina Division, whereupon Bojovitch suddenly turned and once more possessed himself of the pass.

Again and again the Bulgarians attacked, determined to take the pass, but as often as they hurled themselves up the defile, just so often the Serbians drove them back with fire and bayonet.

During this same period another Serbian force under Colonel Vassitch was fighting farther south. On October 22, 1915, he succeeded in recapturing Veles, which, it will be remembered, Todoroff had taken in his rapid advance during the first few days of his fighting. Here it was that the Serbians expected to make a juncture with the French forces under Sarrail, and for several days they could even hear the thunder of the French guns repelling a Bulgarian attack, so close together were they.

For a whole week Vassitch held Veles against the overwhelming attacks of the Bulgarians; then, finally, on the 29th, he was compelled to retire to the Babuna Pass, the narrow defile also known as the Iron Gate, through which passed the highway from Veles to Monastir, by way of Prilep. By the first of November, 1915, the Serbians were still holding this pass, which was all that prevented the Bulgarians from driving in the wedge that was to separate Upper Serbia from Macedonia.

While it was true that no important part of the Serbian army had as yet been eliminated from the field; that it was, as a whole, still intact, yet it was now evident that the little nation had come very near to the end of her resistance. By this time it was quite obvious that no real help could be expected from the Allies. Great Britain had offered the island of Cyprus to the Greeks, if they would stand by their agreement by joining the Serbians, against the Bulgarians, at least. But even that tempting offer would not induce them to risk themselves in a fight whose outcome seemed so doubtful. On October 20, 1915, Italy had given her moral support by declaring war against Bulgaria, but for the time being she offered nothing more material. On October 21, 1915, British and French ships bombarded the Bulgarian port of

Dedeagatch, on the Gulf of Enos, and also a junction of the railroad connecting Saloniki with Constantinople, but this had no material result in deterring the Bulgarians from pressing their campaign against the Serbians in Macedonia. On October 28, 1915, Russian ships bombarded Varna, on the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria. This was done, not so much for any material damage that could be done to Bulgaria, but for the moral effect it might have on the population, which was supposed to have very deep feelings of regard for Russia, because she had freed them from the Turks in 1878. But the Bulgarian troops previously stationed at this point had been replaced by Turkish forces, so that it is probable that the Bulgarian population was not much affected.

On land, the French troops under Sarrail had advanced farthest north; on October 23, 1915, they defeated the Bulgarians severely at Rabrova and pushed on to Krivolak, where they again engaged the Bulgarians on the 30th and repulsed their attack. By November 2, 1915, the French were at Gradsko, where the Tcherna joins the Vardar River, hoping to get in touch with the Serbians who were defending the Babuna Pass and whose guns they could hear pounding over the ten miles of intervening mountain ridges. The British bore little of this fighting, having made their advance over toward Lake Doiran.

But though the French had arrived within hearing of the Serbian guns, they lacked the numbers that would give them the strength to push farther. The French, indeed, had done well in their efforts to support the Serbians in their distress. It was Great Britain that had not lived up to her promise of affording "our Allies all the material assistance in our power." So obviously had the British military authorities failed that much public sentiment in Great Britain was worked up against them, which became all the more acute when a telegram from M. Pachitch, the Serbian premier, was published, in which he said: "Serbia is making superhuman efforts to defend her existence, in response to the advice and desire of her great ally. For this she is condemned to death. . . . In spite of the heroism of our soldiers, our resistance cannot be maintained indefinitely.

We beg you to do all you can to insure your troops reaching us that they may help our army. . . ."

On the same day this was published in the London papers, there was also printed a speech made by Lord Lansdowne in the House of Lords, in which he stated that the British had landed in Saloniki a force of only 13,000 men.

In France the sentiment in favor of assisting the Serbians was so strong that the Cabinet, which did not approve of a Balkan campaign, was forced to resign. The French president thereupon found a new prime minister in M. Briand, the ex-Socialist, who once before had been premier, and, associating with himself M. Viviani and other ex-ministers, he formed a Cabinet which was prepared to push the campaign in aid of Serbia to the fullest extent. On the following day, October 29, 1915, General Joffre went to London to consult with the British Government and to persuade them to take more energetic measures with regard to transporting troops to Saloniki. Apparently his mission was successful, for after that large forces were sent to the Near East, but so far as any effectual help to Serbia was concerned, it was now too late.

At about this time Greece was showing a decided change of attitude. Evidently this change was not a little due to the success of the Austro-Germans and the Bulgarians in the north, and the nearer they came to her own frontier, the less cordial became Greece to the Allies. Every obstacle, short of armed interference, was put in the way of transportation of troops and supplies to the front up in Macedonia. This attitude was to continue until the Serbians were finally swept out of their native land and the question came up of retiring the allied troops back to Saloniki, across Greek territory, when the British and French took very severe measures against the Greek authorities.

Meanwhile, the invasion of Serbia was rolling onward. Having taken Kragujevatz, where they began restoring the arsenal to working order with feverish haste, the Austro-Germans crossed the Cacak-Kragujevatz road and continued onward. Kövess advanced over the Posetza and the Germans entered Jagodina on November 3, 1915.

By this time the Serbian headquarters at Kralievo was seriously threatened; in fact, the Serbian Government was able to withdraw just in time to prevent capture and establish itself in Rashka. On came the enemy, along both banks of the Western Morava. In the streets of Kralievo there was fierce fighting, at times hand-to-hand, between the defenders and the Brandenburg troops of the invaders, but finally, on November 5, 1915, the town was taken.

Here the invaders made their first large capture of war material, which included 130 guns, though most of them were said to be of an obsolete pattern, the others being without breech-blocks. Within forty-eight hours the Germans had reached Krushevatz, where 3,000 Serbian soldiers were captured, not counting 1,500 wounded lying in the hospital.

The whole Western Morava was now in the hands of the invaders. To the eastward Gallwitz pressed on until he came to the hills south of Lugotzni, where he was held up for a short space by the Serbian rear guards. Finally, the heights were taken by storm. On November 4, 1915, Parachin on the railroad was taken; from this point a branch line runs back to Zaichar, already in possession of the Bulgarians, so that now the two armies, German and Bulgarian, were almost in touch with each other. And next day, in fact, their lines joined up at Krivivir, which was taken that night by an assault under cover of darkness. Their lines were now only thirty miles from Nish.

During this time other large bodies of Bulgarians under Boyadjieff were also advancing on Nish; one from Pirot, in a southerly direction, and another along the road from Kniashevatz, marching north. They were now closing in on that city in overwhelming strength.

CHAPTER XXX

THE FALL OF NISH—DEFENSE OF BABUNA PASS

AT a small village called Svrlig, six miles outside the city, the Serbians began a fight which presently assumed the character of some of the bloody battles they had fought earlier in the campaign. Again and again the Bulgarian attacks were hurled back; thus the battle lasted for three days, from November 2 to 5, 1915. The Serbians retired only when the Bulgarians began bringing up their big guns, and the shells were already dropping into Nish. On November 5, 1915, the Bulgarians entered the city and took possession, where even yet the British and French flags were flying, raised by the Serbians when they still thought that only a few days intervened until they would be welcoming the allied troops. A hundred guns were taken with Nish, though the Serbians claimed that they were old and obsolete.

The fall of Nish, from a political point of view, at least, was the worst blow that the Serbians had suffered since the capture of Belgrade. The German and Austrian papers made the most of it, and indeed all Europe now realized that the last days of the Serbian resistance were at hand.

In Macedonia the Bulgarians under Todoroff were not having an easy success. They were being held up still at Katshanik Pass, where the Serbians under Colonel Bojovitch were daily beating back the Bulgarian assaults and thus keeping open the retreat of the main Serbian army. Down in the Babuna Pass the Serbians were making a similar stubborn defense, hoping against hope that the French would come to their relief. And possibly, had it not been for the defeats that the Bulgarians were receiving from the French at Strumitza, they would have been able to take the pass long before. For in that direction Todoroff had been suffering great loss; so severely was he pressed that he was, for the time being, unable to press his advance into the heart of

Macedonia. To this extent, at least, the Allies, and especially the French, did help the Serbians.

The Bulgarians were in exactly the same position, and trying to accomplish exactly the same thing, as in the Second Balkan War. At that time they were endeavoring to drive a wedge in between the Serbians and the Greeks. Now the situation was the same, except that the French were in the place of the Greeks.

From Katshanik to Krivolak the railroad was in Bulgarian hands. From Krivolak south to Doiran it was in the hands of the Allies, though parts of it were at times under the fire of the Bulgarian artillery. South of Katshanik the Bulgarians had crossed the road and had pushed westward until they were held up at the Babuna Pass. Should the pass be forced the Serbian line was in immediate danger of being flanked and the French, too, would be in a similar danger, for by striking south the Bulgarians could make a move around toward the French rear. Hence the almost superhuman efforts both Serbians and French were making to close this gap.

The stand that the Serbians made in Babuna Pass was one of those feats which will remain inscribed on the pages of history through the ages and will excite the admiration of all people, regardless of how their sympathies may lie toward the main issues of the war. During the first week of November Colonel Vassitch had only 5,000 men with which to dispute the right of way against 20,000 Bulgarians. And not only had the Bulgarians a great advantage in the matter of numbers, but they were well supplied with big guns. Day after day and night after night, the little force of Serbians crouched among the deep shadows of the defile, sometimes without food, always under a heavy fire, now and again making the rock cliffs about them echo with bursts of their plaintive, national folk songs. After November 4, 1915, the Bulgarian attacks became more persistent, and their infantry would hurl itself up into the pass; then the Serbians would spring up from behind rocks and ledges and throw themselves at their hated kinsmen with naked bayonets, shouting such words in their common language as send the flush of rage

burning through the cheeks of men and make things red before their eyes. Again and again were these sanguinary hand-to-hand struggles enacted under the towering rock walls of those forbidding mountains, and again and again the Bulgarians were thrown back. Meanwhile, the French, only ten miles away, were within sound of the firing.

As a matter of fact, General Sarrail had already done wonders, considering the shortness of the time he had had and the small forces and few facilities at his disposal. It seemed, to those at a distance, such a small gap to fill. And indeed, so nearly did Sarrail effect the junction that nothing but the absence of reenforcements at a critical moment caused him to fail.

As soon as he had landed at Saloniki he had sent every soldier under his command along the railroad up the valley of Vardar, toward Veles. Unfortunately, transportation facilities were poor; the road was only single track; curving and twisting in and out among the rising foothills and mountain spurs.

His first fighting had been at Strumitza station, where he defeated the Bulgarians and so assured himself of possession of Demir Kapu defile, a cleft in the mountains ten miles in length and from which, had they held it, the Bulgarians could easily, with a comparatively small force, have prevented any further advance. Having secured this pass, Sarrail pushed through it to Krivolak, which was reached on October 19, 1915. But here he was compelled to make a halt, to fortify this advanced position and to await further reenforcements.

When news of the proximity of the French advance reached Vassitch, he redoubled his efforts, and on October 22, 1915, he thrust his little army forward and succeeded in recapturing Veles. This town lay along the railroad, about thirty-five miles northwest of Krivolak.

Three miles north of Krivolak, on the road to Ishtip, rises a steep and forbidding height, called Kara Hodjali (the Black Priest), which the French were fortunate enough to take before the Bulgarians came up in force. It was this height which enabled them, when the Bulgarians did swarm down on them, some days later, to hold their position. From October 30, 1915, until

November 5, 1915, the fighting here was furious, but finally the Bulgarians were driven back. Meanwhile, however, the advance had been delayed and Vassitch, after holding Veles a week, was forced to retire to Babuna Pass again.

From Krivolak to the pass was twenty-five miles, due east. For fifteen miles the road lay across a rolling plain, to the River Tserna, as the Macedonians and Serbians called it, or Tcherna, meaning "Black," in Bulgarian. Beyond that rose steep and difficult mountain ridges, which the Bulgarians had occupied and fortified. Yet Sarrail determined to make an effort to force his way across.

By this time reenforcements had arrived from Saloniki, so he began moving across the plain through Negotin and Kavadar to the Tcherna. This stream, though narrow, was deep and unfordable. It could be crossed only in one place, by a small plank bridge, at Vozartzi.

On November 5, 1915, the French troops began crossing this bridge and scaling the heights before them, some of whose peaks towered fully a thousand feet above the river. And here it was that they first heard the booming of the Serbian guns, on the other side of the ridge.

Sarrail now advanced his men northward, along the west bank of the Tcherna, and next day he delivered an assault on the Mount of the Archangel, ten miles below Vozartzi. Here was the center of the Bulgarian positions, and here their lines must be pierced, if Babuna Pass was to be reached.

But not only was this position well fortified, but the Bulgarians were in superior force to the French. Moreover, as soon as Todoroff heard of what was going on, he hurried reenforcements to the Bulgarians on Mount Archangel. And this Sarrail knew; yet, without hesitation, he began the assault.

At the first attack the Bulgarian advance lines were driven out of the villages at the base of the mountain. The French continued their advance, and on November 10, 1915, they began a circling movement which resulted in the Bulgarians being squeezed out of Sirkovo, a village some distance up the mountain.

But by this time the Bulgarian reenforcements were beginning to arrive, and by the end of the second week of the month they began to take the offensive. They now had 60,000 men; against this force it was obviously impossible for the French to make any further headway.

The Bulgarian commander now showed that it was his intention to circle about the French, cut off their retreat by destroying the wooden bridge over the Tcherna in their rear, then pin them up against the mountain and pound them until they surrendered, all of which might have been accomplished by a more skillful general.

For three days a violent battle raged, in which the fate of the French army more than once hung in the balance, but superior military skill counted in the end. Possibly, too, the hearts of the Bulgarian soldiers were not in this fight, for the Bulgarian people have an almost reverential respect for the French. At any rate, they did not show here the same qualities that so distinguished them in the war gainst the Turks. At the end of the third day their lines began wavering, then broke. So completely were they routed that the French were compelled to bury nearly 4,000 of the dead they left behind. So close had the fighting been that at times the Bulgarian infantry charged the French positions to within a dozen yards, but in the last moment lacked the dash to carry them through the machine-gun fire and into the French ranks. At such moments the French would countercharge, whereupon the Bulgarians would turn and flee. Had the French been only a few thousand men stronger, they could have followed up their advantage, completely routed the Bulgarians, pushed their way across the mountains to Babuna Pass and so relieved the Serbians, as well as closing the gap through which the Bulgarians were yet to penetrate into Macedonia.

The French completed their victory on November 14, 1915; until the next day the Serbians held out, hearing the French guns, now loud and clear, then receding, hoping every hour to see them come streaming over the mountains to their aid. But the French could not do the impossible. The Bulgarians had

been thrown back, but not crushed. Sarrail dared not leave that slender crossing over the Tcherna too far behind.

On November 16, 1915, the Serbians finally fell back from the pass on Prilep. The French, however, not knowing of the Serbian retirement at the time, continued to hold their advanced position at Mount Archangel until November 20, 1915, when the Bulgarians returned to give them fresh battle. And again the French were able to repulse their attacks, but further advance was now out of the question.

The situation of the Serbian armies up in the north was now truly desperate. The combined Austro-German and Bulgarian lines, beginning at Vishegrad, north of Montenegro, swept in a straight line across the heart of Serbia to Nish, where it curved downward to Vranya, then swept into Veles and down to where the French army prevented it from reaching the Greek frontier. It was, in fact, like a great dragnet, which had only to be contracted to sweep the Serbians inward, over against the awful defiles of the Montenegrin and Albanian Mountains, a country through which no organized army could pass in a body, and through which only the strongest of the noncombatants could hope to escape alive. And for a time it seemed as though the French would prick a hole through this net, through which, by rending it into a wide gap, the Serbians could have been saved. But with the retirement of Colonel Vassitch from Babuna Pass that last chance was gone; Serbia was left to her fate.

Meanwhile the pressure from the north continued irresistibly; steadily the Serbian armies were being pushed back against the mountain ranges, in comparison to which their own mountains were mere hills. And while the Serbians were waxing weaker every day, their enemies were growing stronger, not only because their long line was contracting, but because now they were being constantly reenforced. Also, with the cutting of the railroad, all means of supply were gone; the Serbians must now continue the fight with their own resources. They were now becoming woefully short, not only of ammunition, but of food as well. Yet they continued the struggle, retreating before the enemy facing them, step by step backward, taking advantage of every

little natural position to cause the invaders as much loss as possible.

During the two weeks following the fall of Nish the three commanders of the invading armies began, and continued, a great converging movement on the Kossovo Plain, their object being to completely encircle the main Serbian armies. Kövess was advancing his forces toward Mitrovitza on the north side of the plain from Kralievo up the valley of the Ibar, branching out of the Western Morava. In the hills north of Ivanitza the Serbian rear guards made a stubborn attempt to hold him back, but finally they were dislodged and the Austrians occupied Ivanitza on November 9, 1915. Four days later, after driving the Serbians from their intrenchments in the Stolovi ranges, he reached Rashka, which had been the seat of the Serbian Government after its flight from Kralievo and which was situated on the Ibar, some distance along the road to Mitrovitza and only a few miles from Novi Bazar. This place he took on November 20, 1915, and with it a small arsenal, in which were fifty large mortars and eight guns, which even the German reports described as of "somewhat ancient pattern."

To the eastward the Austrians had taken possession of Sienitza and Novi Varosh, up toward the Montenegrin frontier. Being expelled from Zhochanitza, the Serbians retired to Mitrovitza. By November 22, 1915, the Austrian lines had followed to within five miles of that point.

Gallwitz and his Germans, in the meanwhile, operating on the left flank of the Austrians, was pushing southward, his object being to take Pristina, on the east side of the Kossovo Plain and about twenty miles southeast of Mitrovitza. But this was a task that could not be accomplished without much difficulty, for before him towered the backbone of Serbia's main mountain ridges, each ravine and each ledge sheltering strong Serbian forces.

As usual, however, the big guns cleared the way before Gallwitz, though at Jastrebatz the Serbians made him pay a heavy price in the losses he suffered. On this front the Bulgars were now coming close enough to the Germans to support them; against the two the Serbians had not the slightest chance.

SERBIA CONQUERED

BY ARMIES OF

GERMANY, AUSTRIA, AND BULGARIA

ARCHDUKE FRIEDRICH AND VON HOETZENDORF
TROOPS AND ARTILLERY NEAR BELGRADE,
THE DANUBE, MONTENEGRO, AND ALBANIA

Photo by Vladimir Betzitch

Serbian troops crossing the Kolubara by wading and the use of the ruins of a bridge. Defeated by superior numbers, the Serbians displayed great gallantry and hardihood

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Archduke Friedrich, who represents the Austrian Emperor as Commander in Chief, and Baron Conrad von Hoetzendorf, Austrian Chief of General Staff, on the platform of a railway station in Serbia

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Serbian soldiers intrenched on the brow of a hill overlooking the Danube, where they fought with the greatest bravery against the invasion of their country

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Under fire from the Serbian forces, General Mackensen's engineers constructed this great bridge across the Danube, and his army crossed for the invasion of Serbia

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An Austrian motor car on the road along the famous Black Mountains of Montenegro. The view was taken from Antovac

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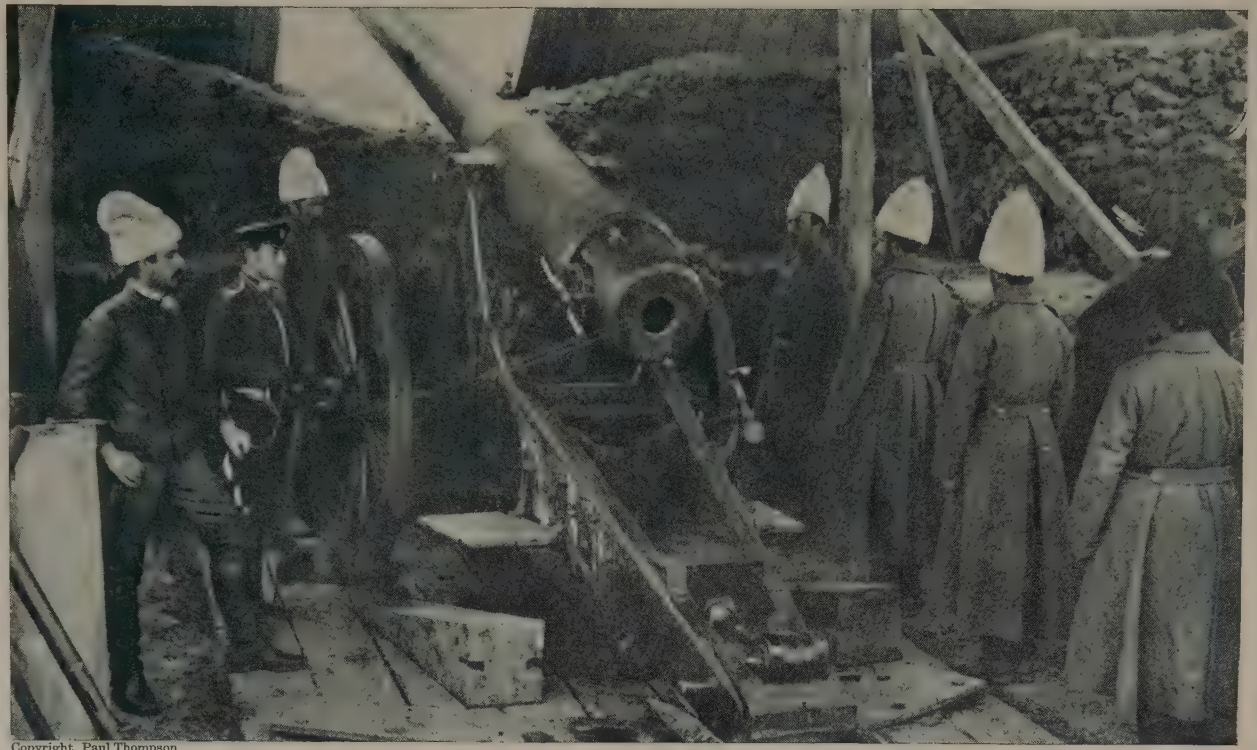
Bosnian troops near the frontier of Albania—the turbulent country created by the Great Powers after the first Balkan War. Its Adriatic ports are desired by Austria and Italy, as well as by Greece, Serbia and Montenegro



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Bulgarian artillery in a protected position. The Bulgarians found opportunity in the plight of Serbia to revenge themselves for their defeat in the Second Balkan War

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Firing a large Skoda mortar in the mountain country to the south of Belgrade. Winter in the Balkans was intensely cold and full of hardships for both soldiers and refugees

By November 8, 1915, Gallwitz was starting out from Krushevatz, after which he followed the banks of a small branch of the Western Morava in a southwesterly direction, toward Brus, with one part of his force, another being sent due south across a range of high hills toward Kurshumlia. He soon reached Ribari and Ribarska Bania, where the retreating Serbians gave him what he himself described in his official report as "very stiff fighting." Next he stormed the pass through the mountains and thus gained an entrance to the valley of the Toplitza, through which flows a river westward into the Morava, the main stream by that name, though in this district it is known as the Southern Morava.

A week's hard fighting and marching followed before Kurshumlia could be taken, which the Serbians evacuated without resistance, though not before they had stripped it of everything that might be of value to the enemy. Here was located a Serbian hospital, full of wounded soldiers, all of whom fell into the hands of the Germans.

Moving on from this town, which lay about halfway between Krushevatz and Pristina, the Germans next pushed on to Prepolatz defile in the eastern part of the Kopaonik Mountains, which they reached on November 20, 1915, then scaled the intervening ridges on their way southward. The Serbians struggled on, but the same day on which Kövess came within striking distance of Mitrovitza, Gallwitz was threatening Pristina from the north end of the Lab Valley.

Thus the Serbians were finally driven out of the last corner of their native land, on November 20, 1915. Only a week previously Mackensen had communicated with the Serbian leaders, offering them terms that certainly should have seemed alluring to them in their dire extremity. This offer had been to the effect that if they would make peace they should lose nothing but Macedonia and a strip of territory along the Bulgarian frontier, including Pirot and Vranya.

The answer of the Serbian Premier, M. Pachitch, to this offer of separate terms was:

"Our way is marked out. We will be true to the Entente and die honorably."

After the evacuation of Nish the Serbians, under Marshal Stepanovitch, retreated to the west bank of the Morava, blowing up the bridges as soon as they were across. Here they held up the Bulgarians for some time, the river acting as a screen. It will have been noted that the Serbian forces always offered the most stubborn resistance to the Bulgarians, often coming to close quarters with them, whereas the Austro-Germans drove them on miles ahead of them. The reason was that the Bulgarians were not so well provided with heavy artillery, such as they had being more or less matched by the Serbian field pieces. The Germans, however, could stand off several miles and shell a Serbian position without the Serbians being able to reply with one effective shot.

In this battle along the Morava, King Peter appeared, hobbling up and down the lines under fire, talking to the men here and there and uttering words of encouragement. This had the effect of reviving some of the old enthusiasm which was somewhat dampened after such a continuous series of reverses and retreats.

CHAPTER XXXI

BULGARIAN ADVANCE—SERBIAN RESISTANCE

ON November 7, 1915, the Bulgarians captured Alexinatz in the north. The Serbian army of the Timok, retiring from Zaitchar, barely succeeded in crossing the bridge over the river in time to avoid complete disaster. In the south, and on that same day, the Serbians were compelled to abandon Leskovatz. With the capture of these two towns, and several other minor points along the line, the enemy secured complete possession of the main line of railroad from Belgrade through Nish to Sofia and Constantinople, and of the Nish-Saloniki railroad as far south as the French intrenchments at Krivolak. This was to them a very material triumph, for hitherto they had been transporting

munitions to the Turks by the water route, along the Danube to Rustchuk in northern Bulgaria. This route was not only more direct, but much quicker. Their main object had now been accomplished in full. Thus Germany was now in direct railroad communication with Asia, and again the German and Austrian papers made frequent references to a possible Egyptian campaign in the future. Another great advantage resulting to both Bulgaria and the two Teutonic empires from the capture of the railroad was the fact that Bulgaria, whose cereal crops had been accumulating in big stores because they could not be exported, could now send them into Germany and Austria, where they were badly needed, thus defeating in some measure the object of the British blockade.

From Alexinatz the hard-pressed army of the Timok had only a single line of retreat, which was by the road to Prokuplie and Kurshumlia, and, in danger of being cut off by the Germans in the west, it began a hurried march, though fighting rear-guard actions all the while, and was thus able to make a junction with the Serbians retiring from Krushevatz. Prokuplie did not fall into the hands of the Bulgarians until November 16, 1915. Northwest of Leskovatz, where the pressure was not quite so extreme, the Serbians under Stepanovitch made a determined stand on November 11-12, 1915. Charging the Bulgarian center suddenly, they broke through their lines and threw them back in great confusion and took some guns and a number of prisoners. But as usual, the Serbians were not strong enough to follow up their advantage, and presently strong reserves came up to reenforce the Bulgarian forces. Two days later the fight was renewed and the Serbians were compelled to retire down the road toward Tulare and Pristina.

Meanwhile the Bulgarians in Uskub were sending forces north toward Pristina, and this sector of the campaign was to witness the battle of Katshanik Pass, in which the Serbians were yet to put up a fight as heroic as any of the whole campaign.

It has now become quite obvious to the Serbians that they were not to receive from the Allies the assistance that was necessary to save their main armies. At this time there were

reports of a Russian invasion of Bulgaria to be led by General Kuropatkin, and it was even said that the czar had himself sent a telegram to the Serbian Premier, M. Pachitch, promising him such aid if only he could hold out until the end of November, 1915. How much of these rumors reached the Serbians is not known, but at any rate they did not materially affect their plan of action. There was only one plan now possible, and that was to effect an orderly retreat to some territory where their enemies could not follow, and thus keep the army intact. The way behind them, into the mountains of Montenegro or Albania, lay open. But without railroads, without even one good wagon road, it was impossible for an army to pass this way in a body. It would have to break into small bands, each taking a separate trail by itself. Aside from that there was no food supply; the soldiers would starve to death. It was true that the ships of the Allies controlled the Adriatic, but without roads no adequate food supply could be forwarded to the retreating armies. Nor did those barren regions offer any local supply; the poverty-stricken natives could barely maintain themselves. The only alternative to a retreat through this wilderness was to escape south over the Greek frontier, where they could join the French and British forces outside Saloniki.

But this was just the alternative which the Austro-Germans and the Bulgarians were determined to deny them. The Serbian forces still numbered somewhere around 200,000; this body, combined with the allied troops, who would presently be number ing another 100,000, would form a military force, its rear protected by the British and French ships, which the Teutons and Bulgarians would never dare to attack, even though the Greeks still continued neutral. Moreover, there was no doubt that the Greeks would interfere should the Bulgars cross their frontier.

This force, then, would continue a constant threat to the lines of communication and transportation which had just been opened up between the Central Powers and Turkey, and along which they would soon be sending large quantities of war munitions to the Turkish forces at Gallipoli. At any moment the enemy

at Saloniki might strike, and to guard against such a possibility, the Austro-Germans would have to maintain larger forces along the railroad than they could spare. At all costs the Serbians must be prevented from joining the Allies. And this was the object of the powerful effort made by the Bulgarians to hurl their forces through the gap between Sarrail and the Serbians in the Babuna Pass.

However, the Serbians decided on a determined effort to break through the net that was being drawn around them. This meant, first of all, that the Katshanik Pass, which in the second week of November, 1915, was still in the hands of the Serbians but was being attacked from the south by the Bulgarians, had to be first cleared of the enemy, who must then be driven out of Uskub, whence the Serbians would then be able to force their way west to Tetovo, and then south by the main highway through Gostivar and Kitchevo, to Monastir. Once at Monastir the road would be comparatively easy to Saloniki, by way of the short branch of railroad whose terminus was at Monastir.

In the effort to carry out this plan one of the most desperate battles of the whole Serbian campaign was fought, quite as bloody and as heroic as any of the large engagements that were fought in the beginning of the invasion. It failed, but it was a failure of which no army need to have been ashamed.

On about November 10, 1915, Bojovitch's army with which he had been holding the pass against overwhelming numbers of Bulgarians, had dwindled to 5,000. At about that time he was reenforced by three regiments, including one from the famous Shumadia Division and one from the Morava Division, which were sent to him along the railroad, the only bit of railroad remaining to the Serbians, leading from Pristina to Ferizovitch, the latter point being some ten miles distant from the Katshanik Pass. The weather had begun getting cold and raw by this time, and the roads were in a miserable condition. The Serbians, though exhausted by their many hardships, and weak from the want of proper food, set out from the terminus of the railroad and pressed on toward the pass. As soon as they arrived Bojovitch prepared to deliver his final attack on the Bulgarians.

The Serbian general had now about one hundred field pieces, mostly of the French 75 and 155 type; 3 inches and 6 inches. With these he began a vigorous bombardment of the Bulgarian trenches, raining a continuous shower of shrapnel and high explosive shells on them. Under this terrible fire the Bulgarians were compelled to retire from their defensive works and retreat south for four miles, out of range of the Serbian artillery.

Then the Serbian infantry charged, pouring volley after volley into the ranks of the retreating Bulgarians. The latter began fleeing in disorder, but presently they came up against their reserves, whereupon they rallied. On came the Serbians with cries of "Na nosh! Na nosh!" and "Cus schtick! Cus schtick!" ("With the knife!" and "With the bayonet!")

Those were cries that the Bulgarians knew well, and they too set up the same shouts. The rifle firing died down. The two lines charged each other silently, like warriors of old, with points of glittering steel before them. Then came the merging clash, and the rows of running men broke into turbulent mêlées, knots of struggling, writhing bodies. Shouts and hideous curses sounded up and down the lines like the snarls of savage animals. Wounded men reeled, panting and sobbing, sometimes in their savage agony springing on their friends and rending them with their hands and teeth before they finally collapsed into inert heaps, dead. Others, throwing down their unloaded rifles, picked up jagged rocks and hurled them into knots of struggling men, regardless of whether they smashed in the skulls of friends or foes. There had been greater battles in that campaign, but never had the fighting been so savage, so bitter; even the battle of Timok, the first encounter between Bulgar and Serb, was far outdone.

For a while it seemed as if the Serbians would actually batter their way through. One Serbian regiment charged seven times and each time captured three guns, only to have them wrested out of its hands again. Once the Bulgarians' center was pierced by a tremendous effort on the part of the Shumadians and the Morava troops. The Bulgarians sagged back, and some broke and fled.

But again reserves came on the scene, whereas the Serbians were, every last man of them, on the front line of the fighting. Fresh forces of Bulgarians, being shipped up from Uskub by rail, were constantly arriving on the field, and in the end they were enough to turn the balance.

For three days the battle had raged, one continuous series of sharp, hand-to-hand encounters, by night as well as by day. But finally, on November 15, 1915, the Serbians had reached the limit of their strength; the battle was going against them. And then they retired from the pass by way of the Jatzovitza Hills toward Prisrend.

Thus the plans of the Serbians to cut their path south to their Allies on the Greek frontier were defeated, and they were forced back into the north again. The effect of the collapse of this effort was immediately seen in the withdrawal from Mitrovitza of the Serbian staff, such members of the Serbian Government as had remained there and the diplomatic representatives of the Entente nations.

The Bulgarians had been perfectly well aware of the plans that lay behind the tremendous effort made by the Serbians at Katshanik Pass and they had sought to forestall part of it by attacking Kalkandelen, a point which had been taken and retaken more than once. On November 15, 1915, they took it again, and finally, driving the small Serbian force that had occupied it before them, they took Gostivar on the following day, the Serbians retiring to Kichivo, on the road to Monastir. On about the same day, or a little later, Boyadjieff, after a stiff fight, stormed the heights near Gilan, northwest of Kutshanik Pass, and, after occupying Gilan itself, advanced toward Pristina, reaching its vicinity by November 22, 1915.

The invaders had succeeded in their main object, which was to round up and if possible corner the main Serbian forces; they were now rolled back on to the great Kossovo Plain, where they were united, but considerably confused and hampered by the vast crowds of fugitives fleeing from all parts of the north, center and east of the country. Near Mitrovitza, on the north of the plain, near Pristina on the east of it, and at Katshanik

at its southern extremity, the Austro-Germans and the Bulgarians had, by the beginning of the fourth week of November, 1915, absolutely rounded up and hemmed in all the larger forces of the Serbians. Here they must either surrender, engage in one last desperate battle that meant certain destruction, or retire backward into the mountains of Montenegro and Albania, which by this time were covered with deep snow.

It was finally decided to give the enemy one more battle and if that failed, as seemed inevitable, to retreat into the wilderness, thus defeating the main hope of Mackensen, which was to eliminate the Serbians entirely as a factor in the war, either by capturing the whole army or destroying it. King Peter himself was present, hoping by his presence to revive the spirits of his soldiers to such a pitch that they would make a hard fight, for by this time they had undoubtedly lost a good deal of their morale.

Von Gallwitz had passed through Nish and was now driving back the Serbian advance posts in the Toplitza Valley, while the Austrians, on his right, were pressing on toward Novi Bazar. As will be seen by a glance at the map, the Serbians were therefore bearing the concentrated attack of four armies; that which operated from Vishegrad, the mixed forces under Kövess, Gallwitz's army and the main Bulgarian forces. The pressure was incessant. Reenforcements had been hurried through from Germany to make good the heavy losses which had been sustained during the campaign. Communication between the main Serbian armies and the Serbians in the south had now been cut completely and only Prisrend and Monastir remained to be taken before the whole of Serbia and Serbian Macedonia would be cleared of the Serbian fighting forces.

The fight in the region of Pristina was to be the last grand battle of the retreat. Here what remained of the Serbian main forces took battle formation, finally to dispute the enemy's advance. To this end the remaining stock of gun ammunition and rifle cartridges had been carefully saved and a store of war material gathered at Mitrovitza in readiness for such a stand. The weary bullocks were turned loose from the gun carriages they hauled, for there could be no taking them along up among

the crags of the mountain country. The guns themselves were brought into position on the surrounding hills, trenches were dug wherever possible. Machine guns were located to cover the mountain paths and valley roads, and strong redoubts, which had been thrown up with civilian labor before the army had arrived, were manned. And then there remained a brief period during which the weary soldiers could take some much needed rest.

There was something tragically significant that this last stand should be made on the plains of Kossovo, or the "Field of the Ravens," as it is sometimes called by the natives, on account of the great flocks of those birds that frequent it. For on this same field it was that Lazar, the last of the ancient Serbian czars, whose empire included the whole of Macedonia, Albania, Thessaly, northern Greece, and Bulgaria, had fought just such a last desperate battle against the Turks in 1389, and had gone down before the Moslem hordes, and with him the Serbian nation. Each year the Serbians had commemorated the anniversary of this event by mourning.

Kossovo Plain is a high plateau, forty miles long and ten wide; from its rolling fields the forbidding crags of Montenegro and Albania are plainly visible, black in summer and white with snow in winter.

The gray dawn of a November day brought the first mutterings of the storm that was presently to break in fury up and down the whole front. The ragged, mud-stained cavalry of Serbia came trotting wearily through the infantry lines, bearing signs of the many skirmishes they had taken part in. The outlying posts were exchanging rifle fire with the advance guards of the enemy and now, through his powerful field glasses, the Serbian commander could see great masses of the invading troops deploying against his front.

"You have come to see the death of a nation," he remarked to an American correspondent who was present.

"It is sad that a stranger's eyes should see us die," said another officer in high command.

Soon the crackling and sputtering fire of the Mannlicher rifles was rippling up and down the lines; the whole front from

Pristina to south of Marcovitza blazed flame, and the last big battle of Serbia's resistance was on. Two lines of men, the one thick and heavily equipped, the other attenuated and half-starved, were locked together in a desperate hand-to-hand struggle.

As though to afford a proper setting for the scene, nature herself broke into a wild fury; overhead the sky darkened, then the black clouds burst into a howling storm, full of cold sleet and rain. Amidst the black, stark hills, in a ceaseless downpour, men trampled and slipped through the clay mud, dripping wet from head to foot, stabbing, shooting, hurling hand bombs, until this peaceful valley echoed to the shouts and roar of combating armies.

And as the first day's fighting increased in intensity, the fury of the elements overhead intensified, and presently it was impossible to distinguish the roar of the big cannon from the deep crash of thunder; intermingling with the shouts and cries of men roared the blast of the gale as it whipped over rocky eminences.

Here again was raised that dreaded battle cry: "Na nosh! Na nosh!" With such a shout a whole regiment of the fierce Shumadians leaped out of its trenches and tore across the intervening ground between its trenches and the rocks of a near-by eminence which a force of Magyars had made into a position. Haggard from pain and starvation, their hair long and matted, some still in ragged uniforms, but most of them in the sheepskin coats of peasants, their eyes bloodshot with rage, they formed not a pleasant picture to the intrenched Huns. The rifle fire from the eminence leaped to a climax; the Hungarians knew they were fighting for their lives. In the horde rushing up the steep slope lay an appalling danger. Up they surged, without firing a shot, the bayonets gleaming in the lightning flashes. Among the rocks appeared white faces behind black rifle barrels. And then, with one fierce yell, the men in the shaggy sheepskin coats were hurling themselves in among the men in blue-gray uniforms. For a few brief moments there was a wild mêlée; then the men in blue-gray broke and ran.

Such scenes were common throughout the three or four days of the battle.

What made the resistance of the Serbian soldiers so fierce was the knowledge possessed by each that there was no alternative to victory but a retreat into those white, bleak wilds behind him. And there was not a Serbian boy in those ranks who did not realize what a winter's march through that country would mean.

From the fall of Nish, in fact, the Serbians had been fighting with their backs to a wall, and grim and bloody were the struggles between Serb and German in the wild tangle of hills that surrounded the Plain of Kossovo. Quarter was neither given nor asked, and unlucky was the too venturesome Austrian regiment that penetrated the Serbian lines the first few days without sufficient support.

"The 184th Regiment," said one of the soldiers' letters, which were published in the Austrian papers, "went into a valley and was never seen again." One Serbian regiment, stationed to hold the mouth to a small valley, to cover the retirement of another Serbian regiment, remained at its post for four days, fighting off the greater part of an Austro-German division, until, of the 1,200 men of the original detachment, only sixty-three remained on their feet, and most of those wounded.

To his credit be it said that the aged King of Serbia remained with his battling men to the end. While the guns were thundering against Pristina and the thin line of the last resistance was frenziedly holding back the German and Bulgarian lines, there came to an ancient church, which was under fire, a mud-stained old man in a field service uniform. The few foreign correspondents who saw him pass into the church did not recognize in this old man, bent, haggard and unshaven, the king who had sat on the throne of Kara-Georgevitch—the grandson of that famous swineherd.

Before the high altar the old man knelt in prayer while a group of staff officers stood at a distance, watching him in silence. The crash of bursting shrapnel came to them from outside and once a window was shattered and the little church was filled with

splinters of flying glass and still the King of Serbia knelt at his devotions, praying that at the last moment his kingdom might be saved from destruction.

But in spite of his appeals the end came.

CHAPTER XXXII

END OF GERMAN OPERATIONS—FLIGHT OF SERB PEOPLE—GREECE

WITH the fall of Pristina and Mitrovitza on November 23, 1915, ended the operations against Serbia, so far as Mackensen and his Germans were concerned. On November 28, 1915, German Headquarters issued an extraordinary report in which it announced that with the flight of the scanty remains of the Serbian army into the Albanian Mountains "our great operations in the Balkans are brought to a close. Our object, to effect communications with Bulgaria and the Turkish Empire, has been accomplished." After briefly describing these operations and admitting the "tough resistance" of the Serbians, who had "fought bravely," this communiqué asserted that more than 100,000 of them, almost half their original force, had been taken prisoners, while their losses from killed and desertions could not be estimated. The impression left by this document was that there were very few of the Serbian soldiers left. On the other hand, the Allies claimed that on the date mentioned Serbia still had 200,000 fighting men left.

At any rate, it was true that Germany had now opened railroad communications with the Orient. Her engineers and military railroad staff had repaired the damage the retreating Serbians had done to the main trunk line, and early in December through trains were running from Berlin to Constantinople. Having accomplished this, Germany withdrew most of her troops from the Balkans, leaving the Bulgarians to finish Macedonia, and Austria to deal with Montenegro.

It was a nation, rather than an army, that was in flight; not for many hundreds of years has there been such an instance in history. When Nish had fallen into the hands of the enemy, the population in general had realized that the whole land was going to be overrun by the invaders. Then almost the whole people had set out in flight for Monastir, near the Greek frontier, where the Bulgarians had not yet closed in. On its retreat from Kossovo Plain the Serbian army caught up with the rear of this fleeing throng. Winter had set in unusually early that year. Even at Saloniki on the shores of the tepid Ægean and sheltered behind a ring of hills, where snow had not fallen in November in ten years, a fierce northerly gale, known as the "Vardar wind," had sprung up on November 26, 1915, and kept the air swirling with snowflakes, while up in the near-by hills the snow was already two feet deep. Up in the Albanian Mountains the paths and trails were already choked, while chilling blasts of sleet-laden winds howled through the defiles.

The way from Upper Serbia to Monastir led across great, bleak slopes, which were now being lashed by these terrible winter storms. Old women and children fell by the wayside; young mothers, hugging their babies to their breasts, sought shelter behind rocks and died there of weakness and starvation. All along the road of retreat was marked by the abandoned dead and dying. One of the very few descriptions of this phase of the Serbian flight that has appeared was written by Mr. William G. Shepherd, special correspondent of the American United Press:

"The entire world must prepare to shudder," he writes from Monastir, "when all that is happening on the Albanian refugee trails finally comes to light. The horrors of the flight of the hapless Serbian people are growing with the arrival here of each new contingent from the devastated district.

"They say that nearly the whole route from Prisrend to Monastir, ninety miles, is lined with human corpses and the carcasses of horses and mules dead of starvation, while thousands of old men, women, and children are lying on the rocks and in the thickets beside the trail, hungry and exhausted, awaiting the end.

"At night the women and children, ill-clad and numbed with cold, struggle pitifully around meager fires of mountain shrub, to resume in the morning the weary march toward their supposed goal of safety—Monastir. But by the time this dispatch is printed Monastir, too, may be in the hands of the enemy. This will leave them to the mercy of the inhospitable mountain fastnesses, where for the past two days a terrific blizzard has been raging, or to the Bulgarians."

The chief of the Serbian General Staff, Field Marshal Putnik, old and now very ill, was driven along the road in a carriage until his horses fell dead of exhaustion. His escort of soldiers carried him for two days in an ordinary chair to which poles had been tied for handles and so brought him to safety. One account reported that the carriages of the retreating Serbians literally passed over the dead who had fallen in the road, for it was impossible either to spare the time to drag them out of the way or to make a detour to avoid them.

King Peter himself had escaped from Prisrend by motor car, accompanied by three officers and four men, arriving in Liuma over the Albanian frontier. Thence the monarch and his remaining handful of followers set out through the mountains, the king traveling part of the way on horseback and partly in a litter slung between two mules, through mud and a constant downpour of rain. During the evening of the second day they lost the trail, which was only rediscovered after much wandering.

After two weeks' rest at Scutari, King Peter continued his journey to San Giovanni di Medua, Durazzo, and Avlona, whence the party crossed over the Adriatic to Brindisi in Italy, where the king remained incognito for six days. After a two days' sea voyage from Brindisi the old monarch finally arrived in Saloniki, where he was received with all honors by the Greek authorities and the Allies.

It is estimated that the number of civilians in flight over these terrible roads numbered fully 700,000. And of these fully 200,000 died.

"It seems so useless," writes a German officer, in a letter which was published in a German paper, "for there is nowhere else for

us to reach except the sea and there is nothing but the smell of dead bodies of horses, men, cattle—a discord of destruction that seems contrary to all our civilization. Our own men are apathetic and weary, and have no heart in the business. The Bulgarian soldiers are not very popular with us. In the first place they are more like Russians than Germans, and there is something about the Slav that makes one's hair bristle. Their cruelty is terrible."

Meanwhile, Prisrend, on the extreme right of the Serbian main force, did not fall till November 30, 1915. From Mitrovitza a part of the Serbian army had retired and fought the Austrians again at Vutchitra, but was beaten and driven across the Sitnitza, on the western bank of which stream it continued fighting until finally it fled into the mountains.

The main line of retreat was along the highway from Pristina to Prisrend. The Bulgarians, pressing on after, took the heights west of Ferizovitch and also advanced northward toward Ipek, against which point Kövess had sent a detachment. The retreat to Prisrend was covered by the Shumadians. On November 27, 1915, 80,000 Serbians stood at bay in front of this town, but next day, after a few hours' fighting, and having used up all their ammunition, they unbreeched their guns and fled across the frontier into Albania, making along the White Drin for Kula Liuma, while several thousands of them fell prisoners into the hands of the enemy. Thus was the last shot of the Serbian resistance in the northern section of the country fired.

The retreat of the Serbian armies through the mountains of Albania was almost as heartrending as the flight of the civilian population. Day by day, thousands of men, ill-clad and ill-shod, or with bare and bleeding feet, so famished that they fed on the flesh of dead horses by the wayside, stumbled painfully and wretchedly along, over trails deep in snow, some going west toward Scutari, others attempting to reach Greece through Elbassan and Dibra. All semblance of military formation or order was lost; they were now nothing more than a fleeing mob of disorganized peasants, some unarmed, others with guns but no ammunition. Officers and men trudged on side by side, on equal

RETREAT OF SERBIANS

terms. Once an Austrian light mountain battery, following on the heels of the retreat, had arrived at the mouth of a long defile through which the last of the retreating Serbians were winding their way into the mountains, in single file. The Austrian battery immediately opened fire and swept the defile from end to end of all human life.

While the main Serbian armies were being driven out of their native land, the Bulgarians, after taking Babuna Pass and Kitchevo and Kruchevo, on November 20, 1915, halted on their way to Monastir, now only a few miles distant. Monastir itself is practically an unfortified city; it lies on the edge of a broad level plain, offering not the least advantage to a defending force. A few guns might easily sweep the city into a heap of ruins. But above Monastir towers a lofty mountain, so steep that even under peaceful conditions a strong man finds it hard to climb. A few guns placed in position among the rocks on top of this mountain could command the city and all of the surrounding plain within range of their fire. Therefore, the problem of an invading force is to take the mountain outside the city, rather than the city itself.

Beyond this lofty eminence, to the westward, rise thickly wooded ridges, rugged mountain fastnesses, through which, along the bottom of a winding defile, runs the road to Resen and Ochrida and three large lakes: Ochrida, Prespa, and Little Prespa. Below these lakes, which almost join, is the Greek frontier; above them, and some distance beyond, lies the Albanian frontier.

For some days Vassitch and his remaining force of a few thousand footsore soldiers remained at Prilep, awaiting the Bulgarians. When finally they took Brod, with the object of cutting off his retreat, he quitted Prilep and fell back on Monastir, then retired over the mountains to Resen. Here he was joined by two barefooted regiments that had come down from the north with the refugees, but they were too exhausted to be of much value for fighting. Altogether they numbered about 7,000, while the pursuing Bulgarians were at least 30,000 strong. At Resen, where the roughness of the country enabled them to make some resistance, they fought the last battle, or skirmish rather, that was to take place between the Serbians and the invaders, then retired

down along the eastern shore of Lake Prespa and so over into Greece. And now not one Serbian soldier remained either in Serbia proper or Serbian Macedonia. Many of them were yet to do some more fighting, against the Austrians at least, for Austria had yet to invade and conquer that other little Serbian state, Montenegro. As yet the Austrian right wing of Kövess's army had not entered Montenegro, but maintained itself at Vishegrad, from which, using it as a pivot, the center and left wing had swept over Serbia. From Vishegrad across the northern boundary of Montenegro stretched another force of Austrians, meant only to hold the Montenegrins back. Hitherto, the Montenegrin army had been facing this line, without being able to afford the Serbians much assistance. It was not until after the last of the Serbians had been dealt with that the Austrians turned their attention toward the Montenegrins and the conquest of their rugged country. Nor did they seriously undertake this task until toward the end of the year; the whole of this campaign is an episode by itself and will be dealt with presently.

With the disappearance of the last of the Serbian armies into the defiles of the Albanian Mountains, the French and British forces, which had been vainly endeavoring to save Serbia, had no longer any special object in holding their advanced positions in Macedonia, especially as they were not strong enough to undertake an offensive movement, even after the last Serbian defeat, though during November, 1915, large reenforcements had been arriving and disembarking in Saloniki. As already stated, the rumors of military action on the part of Russia against Bulgaria had proved unfounded and a second bombardment of Varna had had no effect on the course of the campaign. Italy had done nothing in the Balkans as yet, except to fire a few shells into Dedeagatch on November 11, 1915. A month later she landed an army on the Albanian coast, at Avlona and elsewhere, but, while this facilitated the escape of many of the Serbian refugees, it was too late to have any effect on the military situation.

Throughout the latter part of November, 1915, after the battle between General Sarrail's army at Mt. Archangel, the British had sent up considerable forces which were deployed on the

French right and were holding the mountain chain to the north of Lake Doiran, forming a natural boundary between Greek and Bulgarian territory.

Though Sarrail had repulsed all the Bulgarian attacks, his position was rendered embarrassing by the fact that the Greek Government had decided to concentrate a large part of its army in that particular corner of its frontiers. Obviously, the Greeks had a right to make whatever movements they wished on their own territory, but the consequences were singularly unfortunate, both for the French and the British, for the Greek commander in chief found it necessary to move troops and stores along the same line of railroad which the British and the French were using. This meant a curtailment of supplies and the checking of effective and continuous supports for the fighting line.

Added to this was the sudden coming of an early winter. While snow was falling even in Saloniki, up in the hills where the advanced lines were deployed a furious blizzard was blowing, against which the soldiers were only prepared with small tents of waterproof sheets for shelters. Down in the base camps the gale swept down the tents so that the men were practically unprotected from the fury of the freezing blasts. At the front the enemy's positions were no longer visible, the intervening valleys being full of swirling clouds of snow. On November 27, 1915, the French War Office issued an official communiqué, which gave the first indication of what was about to happen:

"In view of the present situation of the Serbian armies our troops, which have been occupying the left bank of the Tcherna, have been removed to the right bank of the river, the movement being effected without difficulty."

CHAPTER XXXIII

ALLIES WITHDRAW INTO GREECE—ATTITUDE OF GREEK GOVERNMENT

A GENERAL withdrawal into Greece, with Saloniki as base, had been decided on by General Sarrail, in accordance with instructions from Paris and London.

This now brought up a very peculiar and delicate situation between the Allies and Greece. As a neutral, Greece was strongly disposed to take up the same attitude toward the belligerents as Holland, who during the early part of the war had been interning great numbers of the English and Belgian soldiers who had sought refuge inside her boundaries when the Germans had taken Belgium. The Allies, on the other hand, were not inclined to accept this point of view, as Greece was bound to Serbia by a defensive treaty and therefore could not assume full neutrality without repudiating this treaty. To this Greece opposed the contention, based on a technicality, that the treaty with Serbia had in view only a defensive alliance against Bulgaria, whereas now the Austrians and Germans were attacking, as well as the Bulgarians. The successes of the Austro-German forces had stiffened the determination of the Greek King and his Government to stand by this policy.

However, there was ample room for a diversity of opinion among the Greeks themselves; on which side Greece's political interests lay was largely a matter of individual opinion. The chief, and probably the only, reason why there was any popular feeling in favor of the Allies was because they were opposed to the Bulgarians, whom the Greeks hate in season and out.

But on the other hand, Greek ambitions and Italian ambitions clash in Albania, in the islands of the Archipelago and in Asia Minor. Both nations hope to acquire territory in those countries. And Italy was one of the Allies. Had Italy not entered the war it is very probable that Greece would have aligned herself with the Serbians, French, and British in the early stages of their

operations. But when Italy declared war on the side of the Allies, there was no doubt in the minds of the Greek politicians that she had been promised much, if not all, of the territories on which they had their own eyes. Added to this, the King of Greece was related to the German Emperor through marriage, his queen being a sister of Emperor William.

All through November, 1915, and during the early part of December, 1915, the ambiguous, doubtful attitude of Greece was causing the French and the British much anxiety. It was a curious and, for the Allies, a very dangerous situation. Faced as they were by an enemy much their superior in numbers, there was danger of finding that disadvantage considerably intensified by the inclusion of Greece among their enemies.

The unrestricted command of the base at Saloniki was now indispensable for the safety of the allied forces. They had landed under the terms of a "benevolent neutrality," even at the request of the Greek Government, while Venizelos was at its head. With the change in premiers had come a complete change in attitude. The Greeks had begun hampering the Allies at every turn. Prices were raised; they were called upon to pay in advance, and in gold, for the use of the railroads in transporting the troops. Further, the Greek troops were actually occupying the defensive positions around Saloniki; positions which the Allies should occupy and strengthen, if they were to make their base secure. The Greeks stretched barbed-wire entanglements between themselves and the allied troops. Submarine mines, stored as if ready to be launched, were discovered at the mouth of the Vardar River, and the fort at the entrance to the upper Gulf of Saloniki had been secretly strengthened and heavy guns mounted. The port swarmed with German and Austrian and Bulgarian spies; its atmosphere was heavy with hostility to the Allies. Prince Andrew of Greece, in an interview with a neutral journalist, said that as long as 80,000 French soldiers were hostages to the Greek army for the Allies' good behavior, the Allies would never dare to bombard Athens or any other Greek port. So critical did the situation become that one Sunday the British ships cleared for action.

And now, after the failure of the French troops to join up with the Serbians in Babuna Pass, arose the probability of withdrawing their forces in Serbian and Bulgarian territory across the frontier to Saloniki. Thus arose the question: How would Greece comport herself on their retirement? Would she give them complete freedom of communication south of the frontier to Saloniki? Or would she seek to disarm and intern them and such Serbians as crossed the border?

A brief review of the political events that had been happening in Athens since the situation of the Serbians had become acute will show how divided Greece herself was on these questions.

When France and Great Britain decided to assist Serbia by sending forces to her support, Venizelos was premier of Greece and it was with his consent that the first contingents began disembarking in Saloniki on October 5, 1915. His policy of thus aiding the operations was thoroughly discussed in the Greek Chamber of Deputies and approved by a majority of 45 in a house of 257.

The following day King Constantine summoned the premier and told him that he could not support his policy and demanded his resignation, which was given. In his place the king installed M. Zaimis. In a meeting of the Chamber a day or two later, on October 11, 1915, the new premier defined the policy of his Government as one of armed neutrality, adding that "our attitude in the future will be adapted to events, the course of which will be followed with the closest of attention." Whereupon Venizelos arose, protesting, and made a speech that clearly defined the attitude that he thought Greece should follow, and which he felt was supported by a majority of the people.

"Even if there did not exist the treaty with Serbia," he said, "our interests oblige us to depart from neutrality, as another state wishes to aggrandize itself at our expense. The question is not whether we ought to make war or not, but when we ought to make war. In any case we ought not to allow Bulgaria to crush Serbia. The national soul will say that it is to the interest of Greece that Bulgaria should be crushed. If Bulgaria should conquer, Hellenism will be completely vanquished."

That Venizelos spoke for the majority of the deputies was soon to manifest itself. On November 4, 1915, in the course of a debate in the Chamber, a Venizeloist deputy, M. Vlachos, made some criticism of the minister of war, which caused the latter to leave the Chamber in violent anger. The scene provoked a tumult, in which cheers and protests mingled. The deputy finally apologized and order was reestablished, the minister of war returning to his seat. It was then that Venizelos arose and expressed the opinion that an apology was also due from the war minister because of his disrespectful behavior in leaving the House. The premier, M. Zaimis, thereupon declared that, in the opinion of the Government, the war minister's conduct had been perfectly correct and he demanded a vote of confidence from the assembled deputies.

M. Venizelos replied by delivering a strong attack on the Government's war policy, which, he said, was not supported by a majority, deploring that Bulgaria was being allowed to crush Serbia, that she might fall on Greece later.

As a result of the vote that followed this discussion, the Chamber refused to express confidence in the present Government by a vote of 147 against 114, in consequence of which the premier, Zaimis, was compelled to resign. The king, however, still persisted in his opposition to the policy of the Venizelos party and immediately called upon M. Skouloudis, one of his own partisans, to form a new cabinet. To avoid any more expressions of disagreement with the king's policy on the part of the Chamber, the new premier, only a week later, ordered the dissolution of that body, his pretext being that the country at large should have an opportunity of expressing itself through a general election. This was a move which Venizelos had always opposed; for, he pointed out, so long as the Greek army was mobilized and Greek soldiers were excluded from casting their votes, the true opinion of the people could never be determined. And even if the soldiers were allowed to vote, they would be under the influence of their officers, who always supported the king's policy.

This high-handed procedure on the part of the Government created a bad impression in France and Great Britain. What

added to that was the dispatch which announced, only a few days before, the arrival in Saloniki in a special train from Sofia of four German officers: Baron Falkenhausen, Colonel von Erbstner, General von der Goltz's A. D. C., Prince von Bülow's son, and another. After a short stay in Saloniki they departed for Athens in a Greek torpedo boat, accompanied by Greek officers of high rank. It was just after the arrival of such a mission in Sofia that Bulgaria had made her agreement with Germany, promising her support in driving out the Serbians. And meanwhile Premier Skouloudis, doing as Radislavov, the Premier of Bulgaria, had done, was protesting daily that Greece had no intention of going against the Allies.

But incidentally he also expressed the opinion publicly that Greece's "benevolent neutrality" did not extend to protecting the allied troops, whether French, British, or Serbian, from the operation of international law, and that, therefore, these troops would be disarmed and interned on their passing over into Greek territory.

His words created some alarm in the allied countries, which was deepened when it became known that Greece was concentrating 200,000 men in and around Saloniki. The question now arose, Should the Allies submit quietly while Greece carried out this publicly declared intention, or should they persuade her to a change of opinion by the application of armed force?

Ordinary arguments had proved unavailing and much time was lost in talk. Opinion and feeling began growing heated in France and Great Britain over the delay, as well as over the question itself. France in particular called for immediate and energetic action, urging that it was necessary to show the iron hand under the velvet glove. The iron hand was not a mere figure of speech, for the British and French fleets could not only bombard the coast cities of Greece, but institute a blockade which would cut off all her supplies.

On November 19, 1915, the British Legation in Athens, communicated a statement to the press, beginning with the following passage:

"In view of the attitude adopted by the Hellenic Government toward certain questions closely affecting the security of the allied troops and their freedom of action (two privileges to which they are entitled in the circumstances in which they landed on Greek territory), the allied powers have deemed it necessary to take certain measures, the effect of which is to suspend the economic and commercial facilities which Greece has hitherto enjoyed at their hands."

At the same time came a dispatch from Athens announcing that the French and British ships had begun to institute a severe search on board all steamers flying the Greek flag in the Ægean and in the Mediterranean.

Thus a partial embargo was placed on Greek shipping, only severe enough to make the Greek Government realize what might happen should a thorough blockade be established. At the same time two visits that were paid to King Constantine while this crisis was acute had a favorable influence on it. One was from M. Denys Cochin, a member of the French Cabinet and a man held in the highest esteem in Greece; the other was from Lord Kitchener, who was on his way back from an inspection of the British forces in Gallipoli, whither he had been dispatched by his colleagues in the British Cabinet to report on the advisability or the reverse of abandoning that peninsula.

Still the negotiations were spun out and it was not till November 23, 1915, that matters were brought to a head by the presentation of a combined note to Greece.

This note demanded formal assurances that the allied troops should under no circumstances be disarmed and interned, but should be granted full freedom of movement, together with such facilities as had already been promised. Greece was only required to live up to her previous promises; she need not abandon her attitude of neutrality. On the other hand, the note categorically stated that the Allies would make restitution for all territory occupied and pay suitable indemnities. Two days later the Greek Government replied in friendly but somewhat vague terms, which were not considered satisfactory, and on the 26th the Entente sent a second note asking for a precise assurance regard-

ing the liberty of movement of the allied troops. The Greek answer was liked so little that it was decided to tighten somewhat the grip of the iron hand.

Thus what is known to international law as a "measure of constraint short of war" was instituted. The pressure was at once felt. At Saloniki particularly the people were obliged to live from hand to mouth, the supply boats being able to bring in only enough flour to last two days. So great was the need of grain in Greece itself that a cargo of flour which had been condemned at Piræus was baked into bread. The Bulgarians attempted to relieve the situation by sending in 15,000 tons of wheat by rail from Sofia, but as the line over which it passed through Drama was presently occupied by the British, this source of supply could not be maintained, nor would it have been sufficient to have relieved the situation.

The Greek public and their Government were strongly impressed. One dispatch stated that Greek troops were patrolling the streets of Athens and that a heavy guard had been placed around the royal palace in fear of revolutionary attempts. Meanwhile the Cabinet Council was sitting in permanent conference with the chiefs of the General Staff trying to come to a decision.

"You are wicked," said M. Rallis, Greek Minister of Justice, to a British newspaper correspondent; "the only thing we want is peace and you force us to make war. You are starving us; two wheat vessels were stopped to-day. You want us to save you when no English soldiers shed their blood for Serbia, when scarcely an English rifle has been fired. We do not wish to be another Serbia."

The newspapers which supported Venizelos, on the other hand, accused the Government of having precipitated the country to the verge of a conflict with the Entente Powers by want of foresight and a policy of deception.

Finally, however, the Greek Government came to terms, accepting practically all that the Allies demanded and withdrawing most of the Greek soldiers from Saloniki, while the Gevgheli-Saloniki and the Doiran-Saloniki railroads were handed over to the Allies with their adjacent roads and land. King Constantine

complained that he was between the devil and the deep sea, or words to that effect, and protested that Greek neutrality was violated, though he did not deny that he had at first acceded to the invitation Venizelos had extended to the Allies to send troops to Saloniki. The king, anxious to be rid of his unwelcome guests, let it be understood that if the Allies would only retire from Greece altogether, he and his army would protect their retreat and see that they were not molested on embarking. But this was a proposition which the Entente Powers were not inclined to consider at all by this time.

Meanwhile, before Greece was finally compelled to come to a complete understanding with the Allies regarding her attitude in the event of a general retirement on Saloniki, General Sarrail's position was becoming decidedly dangerous. The Bulgarian armies were, for the time being, busy pursuing the last remnants of the Serbians out of the country beyond Monastir, but presently they would be able to give their full attention and strength to an attack on the Allies. Thanks to the difficulties occasioned by the concentration of Greek troops in that section of the country, the British forces had not been afforded ample means of transportation and they were arriving but very slowly, though gradually they had established a line along the rugged hills to the north of Doiran. They had not, at the end of November, 1915, fought a general action as yet.

General Sarrail's position was a remarkably insecure one. The taking of Prilep, and subsequently the occupation of Monastir by the Bulgarians, practically turned his line and exposed him to a perilous flanking movement against his extreme left on the Tcherna. His troops were bunched up in a very acute salient, the head of which was just south of Gradsko, and his front very largely conformed to the convolutions of this and the Vardar River. On his right, from before Strumitza Station, the British continued the line to the north of Lake Doiran.

It will seem somewhat strange that, though the British were the first to disembark in Saloniki in the first week in October, 1915, two months should elapse before they took any prominent part in the fighting. The British commander, General Mahon,

reached Greece on October 12, 1915, to be followed a month later by General Munro, but the British made no move of any importance. There were some trifling encounters with outposts, and these had been magnified into battles by the dispatches from Greece, but the truth was that the French had borne the brunt of the struggle on the Tcherna, perhaps because they were then more numerous than the British, who were not actively engaged in force until the first week of December. Their trenches, north and west of Lake Doiran, among bleak hills covered with snow, spread out fanwise in the direction of Strumitza, which they had taken over from the French when the latter had gone up the Vardar to Krivolak.

CHAPTER XXXIV

BULGARIAN ATTACKS—ALLIES CONCENTRATE AT SALONIKI

ON December 5, 1915, the Bulgarians gave the first indications of their preparations to break through the thin lines of the Allies. On that date the British were to have their first taste of heavy fighting. The Bulgarians delivered a massed attack at two points; one at Demir Kapu, another against the British positions on the Rabrovo-Doiran road.

The first assault of the enemy succeeded in gaining a foothold in the British trenches, but the British were presently able to regain their positions and drive the Bulgarians back. Here again it was obvious that the hearts of the Bulgarian soldiers were not in this fighting. Most of the British soldiers had never seen any fighting before, yet they were able to accomplish what the fierce Serbians had not been able to do; drive a superior force of Bulgarians back at the point of the bayonet. Numbers of the Bulgarians were taken prisoners, willingly enough, it seemed, and they told their captors that up to the actual fighting, until they actually saw the troops they were engaging, they had been under the impression they were to fight Greeks.

This first attack made the British commander realize, however, that the enemy opposing him was vastly his superior in numbers. A second assault, delivered in the face of a hot fire from the British, but with overwhelming numbers, drove the British soldiers from their first line of trenches; but they held on to their second line and every effort to expel them was a costly failure.

Meanwhile, Sarrail, on the Vardar, under cover of a feigned attack on Ishtip from Kara Hodjali, drew in his men from the Tcherna, and before the enemy had realized what he was doing, he had retired from the Kavaar Camp with all his stores, of which there was by this time a tremendous accumulation, and entrained at Krivolak, blowing up the bridges and tearing up the railroad behind him. On December 5, 1915, he had reached the north end of the Demir Kapu Gorge (Defile) practically without opposition, but in the gorge he had to fight hard to get out of it.

He had had the forethought, however, to throw up strong defensive works at the entrance and this enabled him to repel the attacks of the Bulgarians in spite of the determination with which they were being pushed. The retreat through the defile was an extremely precarious and difficult task, as there was no way out except along the railroad, running along a narrow shelf cut out of the steep, rocky banks of the Vardar. Yet the retreat was successfully accomplished, with all the stores, and, after destroying a tunnel and a bridge across the Vardar, it was continued to Gradetz, where heavy intrenchments had been thrown up.

Here, on December 8-9, 1915, the Bulgarians delivered a very violent attack, but were driven off with heavy losses. On the 10th the French announced that they were now occupying a new front, along the Bojimia, a branch of the Vardar, and that they were in touch with the left flank of the British.

Meanwhile, on the east side of the Vardar, General Todoroff was continuing his attack on the British. He had massed together about 100,000 men. On the morning of the 6th, after the first assault and under cover of dense mists that were rolling up

from the swamps down near Saloniki, he was able to get in close to the British without being seen. As the dawn began breaking he poured a rain of high-explosive shells on the British, which here consisted mostly of Irish regiments.

As on the day before, the enemy came on in successive waves, so thick that the later ones carried the first before them, even when they turned to flee from the heavy fire of the British. Finally the British were again compelled to give way before the heavy impact of numbers. By evening they had retired two miles, not a great deal, considering the masses that were driving them. More than once it looked as though the British would be literally overwhelmed and annihilated. Eight guns were lost and about 1,300 men were killed or wounded.

The retirement had been in the direction of the Vardar and by the end of the second week of December, 1915, the British were able to make another stand over on the banks of the Vardar, below the right wing of the French.

The whole Bulgarian field army was evidently divided between the Rabrovo road and north of Strumitza Junction. It was clearly the enemy's intention to drive a wedge into the center, thus to isolate all the northern divisions and to bring about a general disaster.

Sarrail recognized his danger and began to retire his northern units, covering the movement with a fiercely contested action in the region of Strumitza.

By December 11, 1915, the French and British lines were close back on the Greek frontier, and although the Bulgarians delivered a heavy attack on that day, it was their final effort; the following day the Allies were across the frontier and the Bulgarians made no attempt to follow them. Possibly they were restrained by their German allies, or possibly they had no desire to involve Greece, for had the Bulgarians set foot on Greek soil, it is more than likely that Greek troops would have resisted them, and once such an encounter had taken place, Greece would probably have thrown herself into the war on the side of the Allies. As they retired, the allied troops destroyed the railroad behind them and set fire to Gevgheli and other towns on the

other side of the border. And, by a fortunate coincidence, it was on the day before they crossed the frontier that Greece had finally accepted the proposals of the Allies that their forces were to be allowed freedom of movement.

Considering the tremendous difficulties he had had to contend with, in the face of the immense strength of his enemy, General Sarrail's retreat by no means diminished his reputation as a military leader. Although his men had at their disposal only one single-track line of railroad and no roads, their retirement was conducted in such order that they were able to save and withdraw all their stores, while the total of their casualties did not exceed 3,500, a very moderate loss under the circumstances. In less skillful hands the retreat might easily have developed into an irretrievable disaster. In its main object, saving Serbia from being crushed, the campaign had certainly been a failure, but this was rather the fault of the allied governments, and not because of the inefficiency of the leaders in the field.

The Bulgarians, naturally, felt that they had attained a great victory, and in a measure they had. On December 14, 1915, they published their version of the operations as follows:

"December 12, 1915, will remain for the Bulgarian Army and nation a day of great historical importance. The army on that day occupied the last three Macedonian towns that still remained in the hands of the enemy: Doiran, Gevgheli, and Struga. The last fights against the British, French, and Serbians took place near Doiran and Ochrida Lakes. The enemy was everywhere beaten. Macedonia is free! Not a single hostile soldier remains on Macedonian soil. . . . In the course of ten days the expeditionary army of General Sarrail was beaten and thrown back on neutral territory. On December 12, the whole of Macedonia was freed. The pursuit of the enemy was immediately stopped when the neutral frontier of Greece was reached."

This communiqué further pointed out that Serbia had been beaten in forty, and the British and French in ten, days. An official paper in Sofia declared that the "victories won over the Franco-British hordes" was even more glorious than those won

over Serbia and declared that Bulgaria had given a lesson to the so-called Great Powers, Great Britain and France, showing them at the same time the manner in which small nations could fight for their independence.

That the Bulgarians did not pursue the allied troops across the Greek frontier was one of the surprises of the campaign. What the Greeks would have done had their hereditary enemies invaded their soil, even though not for the purpose of attacking them, was a question which perhaps the Greek Government itself had not fully answered. Certainly the critical character of the situation placed the Greeks in a very uncomfortable position. It had been at their suggestion that the Allies had come to Greece, and though a protest had been made against their landing, that protest was the last word in formality.

Consequently the Allies had some shadow of a moral right to the use of Saloniki, but now that Sarrail was falling back, with every prospect of his bringing the battle front down with him into Greek territory, the diplomatic situation became extremely delicate. To add to the confusion of the situation, it must be remembered that two or three divisions of the Greek Army had been concentrated in the very district through which the Bulgarians must pass, should they decide to follow the retiring column of the Allies' troops. Here, then, was the Greek dilemma; they had allowed, under formal protest, a pacific penetration of their country in accordance with the agreement they had made with Serbia, that the latter should be allowed to import armies, munitions, and other military material over the Saloniki-Uskub railroad. This agreement, Venizelos insisted, was binding on Greece, notwithstanding the equivocations of the king. But when the French and British troops retired, another situation was created altogether, because it was scarcely likely that the Bulgarians would stop short at the frontier of Greece, and more than likely that they would follow up their advance and incidentally shell and destroy Greek property. Thus Bulgaria would be doing what the Allies had very carefully avoided doing: commit an act of war against Greece.

But fortunately for Greece, the Bulgarians did not continue the pursuit, though the Greek Government waited anxiously to see what turn events would immediately take. Sofia published the most reassuring things about the friendliness of Bulgaria for Greece, though of course Athens, being herself the seat of a Balkan nation, knew what value such protestations of affection had. Greece had only to recall the expressions of friendliness Bulgaria had uttered to Serbia less than a week before attacking her.

Meanwhile the French and British had fallen back on an intrenched line two or three miles to the south of the Greek frontier. This front stretched from Karasuli, on the Vardar River, to Kilindir, on the Doiran-Saloniki railroad, and was about fifteen miles in length. The French were still on the left and the British on the right. The British flank, in the east, was about thirty miles from Saloniki. These lines were strongly intrenched and otherwise strengthened, for it was not yet certain that the enemy did not mean to invade Greece.

In the early days of October, when the Allies had first begun landing their troops, it had not yet been definitely decided that Saloniki was to be held permanently, or at least as long as the war lasted, but by this time the value of the port had been realized. So long as it was held in strong force it constituted a constant threat against any attempt on the part of the Austro-Germans to push their invasion down into Egypt. Further, it was suggested by naval experts that if ever it passed into the hands of the Germans, it might easily become the base for an effective submarine warfare in the eastern Mediterranean, which would be extremely dangerous to the allied fleets in those waters, already the scene of considerable submarine activity, as was demonstrated by the sinking of not a few transports, war vessels, and other ships by the enemy. These waters could not be dragged with steel nets, as had been done in the British Channel. As the terminus of the railroad running through Macedonia from Belgrade, Saloniki was potentially an important city. Austria had long been aware of the high significance of this port and it was, in fact, the final objective of her "Drang nach Osten" policy.

When it fell to Greece after the Second Balkan War she had been bitterly disappointed, which was one reason why she had done her best to spur Bulgaria on to precipitate that unfortunate campaign. And this was another little matter which probably helped to swing the balance of Greek sympathy toward the Allies. What prosperity Saloniki had enjoyed during Turkish rule had been entirely due to its big Jewish population, which had been the mainstay of its commercial activities.

When Greece acquired possession little change followed, and when the troops of the Allies began to disembark in the beginning of October they were at once confronted by a serious difficulty in the absence of docking and local transportation facilities. There was, further, the serious difficulty of obtaining space ashore for camp ground for the troops, as well as suitable level stretches for aeroplanes, Greek troops being in occupation of all such spots. Moreover, the railroad facilities, even when given over entirely to their use, were inadequate.

So long as the outcome of the effort to join up with the Serbians remained in doubt the Allies had not given much energy to fortifying Saloniki in great strength, but immediately the retirement was decided upon this task was undertaken with some dispatch. On and after December 12, 1915, the Allies, having at last succeeded in compelling Greece to agree to their plans for a permanent occupation, began preparations to meet all possible events in the future. As the Greek troops withdrew, French and British forces took their places, some being fresh arrivals, for reenforcements were landing daily at the rate of between 4,000 and 5,000. As there were many rumors of the enemy's intention to advance and attack before the city should be made more defensible, the work of making it as formidable as possible was pushed with fever heat.

Steps were at once taken to establish strong lines of intrenchments. In the course of a week or ten days this task was sufficiently under way to settle the alarms of an immediate attack from the enemy; the lines of the defensive works followed a half circle of hills and lakes, some fifty miles in extent, reaching on the west from the Vardar River to the Gulf of Orfano on

the east and inclosing a very considerable area, giving the Allies sufficient freedom of movement.

Yet it was fortunate for the Allies that political considerations deterred the enemy from making the attack. Had the Bulgarians advanced in full force, the Allies would have been heavily outnumbered, not only in men, but in heavy artillery and ordinary field guns as well. It is doubtful whether they could successfully have resisted a determined effort to turn their flanks.

The conformation of the coast line around Saloniki is a handicap to a continuous defensive line. It would demand more men than other conformations would. Saloniki stands on a gulf, or bay, and this would necessitate spreading the defending lines around it in almost a complete circle, so that the adjacent shores would be protected as well.

There does exist a natural horseshoe of positions from which Saloniki could be held and which would cover the port from sea to sea, but their development extends from 120 to 130 miles of country, an area which could not well be held with less than a force of half a million men. At the eastern horn of the Gulf of Saloniki runs the Kaloron Ridge, culminating in a peak some 3,000 feet above sea level. All the southern slopes of this ridge are exposed to the fire of any fleet of warships that might lie offshore. This ridge continues toward the north by two more peaks, each connected with its neighbor by a saddle-shaped ridge. The positions along this ridge would pass first over a point about a thousand feet high, covering the village of Galatista, and next by a chain to the Hortak Dagh Mountains, one of the nearest points in the line to Saloniki.

To the north again the ground falls abruptly to the level of Lake Langaza, thence turns eastward to the height of Dautbaba, after which the lines could be stretched to the borders of the swampy region at the mouth of the Vardar, ground which is as impassable as the Pripet Marshes on the Russian front and which were formerly occupied by the Bulgarian comatjis, in spite of all the efforts of the Turks to eject or capture them.

On December 20, 1915, there arrived in Saloniki, General de Castelnau, Chief of the General Staff of the French Army. He

THE ALLIES AT SALONIKI

came with the same purpose that had brought Lord Kitchener, to make a tour of inspection of the Near Eastern situation. No doubt a certain anxiety was felt in France and England regarding the security of the Saloniki position, and General de Castelnau had been dispatched to investigate. With General Sarrail he made a thorough survey of the French lines, and with General Mahon he undertook an equally searching tour of the British section. Apparently he was satisfied with the situation, for soon after he stated in an interview to the press that the position of the Allies in Saloniki was excellent. After having passed a week with Generals Sarrail and Mahon, he paid a short visit to King Constantine on the 26th. On the same day the French Government issued an official communiqué, which announced that General de Castelnau, together with Generals Sarrail and Mahon, had settled upon the plan of action to be followed by the Allies and that he had assured the French Government that the arrangements which had already been made rendered the safety of the whole expedition absolutely certain.

This statement came as rather a strong contrast to an official declaration made by the German Government to the effect that Germany would be established in Saloniki by January 15, 1916. Possibly the Teutonic allies may have planned at that time to initiate a campaign against Saloniki, but apparently pressure on their lines on the other fronts became so strong as to divert them from this object.

However, the year was not to close without some disturbance of the monotony of the situation that now set in at Saloniki. In the middle of the forenoon of December 30, 1915, an attack was made on the city by a fleet of the enemy's aeroplanes, which sailed overhead at a great height and dropped bombs, doing considerable damage. One bomb fell on a detachment of Greek troops, which was carrying on drill maneuvers outside the city in the presence of Prince Andrew of Greece. Attempts were made from the warships in the harbor to reach the aircraft with their antiaircraft guns, but as the aeroplanes were over ten thousand feet high they were not hit. French aeroplanes were sent up to engage them, but by the time they had circled up to the

same high altitude, the enemy had disappeared over the mountain tops toward Monastir.

Less than six hours later the soldiers of the Allies suddenly descended on the German, Austrian, Bulgarian, and Turkish consulates and arrested the enemy consuls and vice-consuls, taking them prisoners together with their families and entire staffs. They were immediately marched down to the quays and sent aboard one of the battleships. The four consular buildings were then taken over by the Allies as barracks. On the following day the consuls and their belongings were on their way across the Mediterranean to some unknown destination, though, as developed later, they were landed at Marseilles in France, thence sent to, and liberated in, Switzerland. Later the Norwegian consul was also arrested on a charge of espionage.

One of the disadvantages under which the Allies labored in Saloniki was the comparative ease with which the enemy could spy on their movements. This had especially been the case when their lines had been advanced beyond the Greek frontier.

The Greek Government protested at this breach of neutrality, declaring that such high-handed proceedings undermined its sovereignty and the enemy Powers also protested and threatened reprisals.

Further proof of the decision that the Allies had made to remain in Saloniki was given by their occupation of Castellorizo, an island lying off the mainland of Asia Minor near Rhodes, commanding the Gulf of Adalia. Five hundred French soldiers had been landed, with a view to using the place as a base for operations in that part of Turkey, should that later become feasible. The Greek Government again protested, as it also did when, in the first week of January, the Allies arrested the German, Austrian, and Turkish consuls at Mitylene for the same reasons that had led to the arrests in Saloniki, and shipped these men away on a man-of-war. Greece was indeed kept quite busy framing protests during this period, for on January 11, 1916, a detachment of French soldiers took possession and military control of the island of Corfu, but the Greek garrison

there offered no opposition. The place had some strategic value, but the main purpose for which it was to be used was as a sanitarium for the Serbian refugees, who were beginning to arrive from Albania, and many of whom were in miserable physical condition.

CHAPTER XXXV

ITALIAN MOVEMENTS IN ALBANIA— CONQUEST OF MONTENEGRO

WHILE the French and British were strengthening their position in Saloniki in every possible way, the Italians were beginning a movement which was to have some influence in the Balkans.

Already, a year before, Italy had landed a small containing force in Avlona, Albania, on the Adriatic coast, because Greece had previously occupied a section of southern Albania, contiguous to her frontier. Albania, it will be remembered, had been declared an independent nation after the Balkan wars and William of Wied had been appointed its sovereign, by the consent of the Powers. But so turbulent had his subjects been that finally, when an uprising threatened his life, he fled on a foreign warship. The leader of the Albanians, in so far as they could be brought to respect any one general leader, was Essad Pasha, the Albanian commander at Scutari, who had defended that place so long and so valiantly against the attacks of the Montenegrins during the First Balkan War.

Already in the latter days of November there had been rumors that Italy was landing an army of considerable size in Avlona, to assist the Serbians. This could easily be done without attracting much attention, as this town, often described as the "Gibraltar of the Adriatic," is not more than fifty or sixty miles from the Italian coast and can be reached by steamer in a few hours. Its occupation by an enemy would be highly undesirable, from the point of view of Italian interests.

Baron Sonnino, the Italian prime minister, made a speech in which he declared that Italy was determined to do everything to assist the Serbian army, and that the Italian flag on the other side of the Adriatic would also constitute a reaffirmation of Italy's traditional policy, which included the maintenance of Albanian independence.

By the end of the first week of December, 1915, an army of 50,000 had been landed. With part of this force Italy occupied Durazzo on December 21, 1915, joining up there with Essad Pasha, who had declared himself against Austria. A few days later this chief, in the name of the Albanian nation, declared war on Austria.

Meanwhile, the Austrian warships had become very active along the coast; in December their activities culminated in an attempt to bombard Durazzo, whereupon they were engaged by some Italian, French, and British ships and compelled to retire, with the loss of two destroyers.

Thus, at the beginning of the year 1916, a period of comparative quiet seemed to be settling down over the Balkans, with one exception. And that exception was Montenegro. Austria was now prepared to turn her full attention to this little state, whose soldiers had invaded her territory several times, during the Serbian campaign at the very beginning of the war, and now again, when the final invasion had been undertaken.

Little was heard of Montenegro in the press dispatches, but she had thrown the full strength of her little army into the field against the Austro-German invaders. Before the Balkan wars her fighting men had numbered some forty thousand, but by this time they were reduced to something less than twenty thousand. They were short of artillery and munitions, short of all kinds of supplies, even food, but it was a difficult task for the Allies to offer them any material relief. Montenegro is unserved by any seaport and even the Italians who had landed at Avlona did not hope to establish any communication with them through the mountainous country intervening.

The one topographical feature of Montenegro that must be especially noted is a mountain which rises abruptly, dominating

the surrounding Austrian territory along the coast, more especially the seaport and naval station, Cattaro. The importance of this eminence, Mount Lovcen, would have been paramount, had it been properly equipped for offensive action.

For Cattaro is a natural harbor of the first order, capable of accommodating the whole Austrian fleet. The barracks at Cattaro are plainly visible from the top of Mount Lovcen, but to bring guns of a large enough caliber up there to reach those barracks was practically impossible, on account of the rugged nature of the surrounding country.

During the ten weeks the fourth and final invasion of Serbia was running its course, the warriors of the Black Mountains were engaged in giving their kinsmen, the Serbians, their full support. Indeed, the Montenegrin army, though it amounted only to a few regiments, had held a slice of Bosnia for some time, formed the left flank of the whole Serbian position and did good service during the earlier stages of the conflict, being opposed to the Austrian lines around Fotcha and on the Lim, a branch of the Drina.

But the Austrians along this part of the front were satisfied merely to hold the Montenegrins back, not a very difficult task, considering their numbers. On the other hand, any attempt to advance into their mountainous country would have been an extremely arduous undertaking, entirely out of proportion to the importance of the Montenegrin forces, from a military point of view.

When Serbia had finally been overrun, Mackensen withdrew his Germans and also some of the Austrians, these being sent north up to the Russian front, where there seemed danger of renewed activities on the part of the czar's forces. Especially threatening were the rumors that the Russians were about to make a descent on Bulgaria through Rumania, or across the Black Sea.

The Austrians along the Montenegrin front, however, remained where they were and presently they were strongly reenforced, for Austria was determined on the permanent elimination of Montenegro, as she had been determined on putting

an end to the Serbian nation. Nor was this impossible, in spite of the mountainous nature of the country, if only the invaders were provided with heavy enough guns. What could be done in Serbia could also be done in Montenegro.

As far back as the middle of November, 1915, it was announced in the dispatches from Rome that Austria was assembling a force of three army corps in Herzegovina to attack Montenegro from that side. There was also available the Austrian troops already in Serbia on the eastern frontier of Montenegro, to say nothing of the Bulgarians, who so far assisted the Austrians as to take Djakova, on December 3, 1915. The whole expedition was put under the command of Von Kövess, shortly after the fall of Mitrovitza.

King Nicholas was not ignorant of what was coming. At the end of November, 1915, after Serbia's last resistance had been overcome, he issued a proclamation to his people in which he said that Montenegro would continue the fight to the bitter end, even though it was probable that she would share the fate of Serbia. The Allies, he went on to state, would make every effort to keep, not only the army, but the people as well, supplied with all that was needed to live and to resist the enemy. Supplies had always been a hard problem in that poverty-stricken little land and when the Serbian refugees began flocking in, it became an insoluble problem, unless with help from outside, which was not always forthcoming.

It was obvious that, in spite of the fact that they had assisted in a successful invasion of Serbia, the Austrians, now that they were by themselves again, were not so confident of overcoming even the Montenegrins that they could afford to undertake the campaign impulsively, for during the whole month of December, 1915, they did not press the campaign on the Montenegrin front. During this period and the first week of January, 1916, they were satisfied with more or less holding their lines, though they did advance some distance on the eastern, or Sanjak, front, capturing Plevlie, Ipek, and Bielopolie. But, as an offset to this success, the Montenegrins scored at least one victory of considerable magnitude. On December 1, 1915, the Montenegrin

forces operating in southeastern Bosnia defeated the Austrians near Foca, on the Drina, seven miles across the Drina, forcing the enemy to retreat along the river toward Gorazda. A few days later the Austrians retaliated by sending an aeroplane flying over Cettinje, which dropped a number of bombs on that small city. Other aeroplanes, flying over the Montenegrin encampments, dropped circulars stating that all Serbia had been conquered, and if Montenegro made any further resistance, she would suffer the same fate. Toward the end of the month the Austrians began a heavy bombardment of Mount Lovcen and launched a strong infantry attack against it, but were repelled with considerable losses.

On December 23, 1915, the Montenegrin Government reported having inflicted a reverse on the Austrians advancing from the east. The Austrians bombarded violently in the Mojkovac sector, then attacked Touriak, in the direction of Rozai-Berane, but were thrown back. At Berane the Montenegrins assumed the offensive for a brief space, and at Bielo they drove the enemy troops back as far as Ivania.

However, these were all minor operations and the successes of the Montenegrins were not of a permanent nature. Apparently the Austrians were all this time strengthening their lines and arranging their forces for the general offensive, which they were ready to begin early in January, 1916.

On January 6, 1916, Kövess began decisive operations with a series of violent attacks on the eastern front, on the Rivers Tara, Lim, and Ibar, while at the same time the warships in the Gulf of Cattaro opened a terrific fire on Mount Lovcen.

For four days the Montenegrin troops offered a determined resistance. Berane, on the Lim, was captured by the Austrians on the 10th. On the same day the warships suddenly ceased their bombardment of Mount Lovcen and Austrian infantry swept up the mountain sides and delivered a strong attack. The handful of Montenegrins at the top were completely overwhelmed and Lovcen was captured. Some surprise was expressed among the Allies at the time that this supposedly powerful stronghold should so easily succumb, but it soon developed that the defenders

were not only short of food, but they had run out of ammunition and had practically fired their last cartridges.

With Lovcen in the hands of the enemy Cettinje could no longer be held by the Montenegrins, and on January 13, 1916, it was occupied by the Austrians. The back of the Montenegrin resistance had now been broken.

On January 17, 1916, it was announced in the Austrian Parliament by Count Tisza that the Montenegrin Government had sued for terms of peace. Montenegro's official version of this sudden surrender was given in a note by the Montenegrin Consul General in Paris:

"The newspapers announce that unhappy Montenegro has had to submit to the inevitable after having struggled heroically under particularly disadvantageous conditions against an enemy much superior in number and formidably armed. It may be considered as certain that if the king and the Government have yielded it is because the army had expended the last of its munitions.

"Even flight was impossible. The enemy was on the frontiers; there was no escape by the sea; inveterate hostility was to be encountered in Albania. If the Serbian army was able to escape from Serbia, the weak contingents of Montenegro, exhausted by the superhuman efforts of their long and desperate, but effective resistance, and by privations of all kinds, were not able to seek refuge on friendly territory. It is possible to discuss *ad infinitum* the conditions of the suspension of hostilities, the details of which, it is to be observed, come from enemy sources; it is even possible to heap insults on the unfortunate conquered. . . ."

The question immediately raised in the British and French newspapers was: who opened negotiations with the enemy—the king or his minister? Mïuskovitch, who was frankly in favor of the Austrians, had become premier at a critical moment in Montenegro's fate and negotiations were undoubtedly proceeding while the fighting on Mount Lovcen was still in progress. It was said that this was well known to the troops in the field, and in consequence they had not made so determined a resistance as they might otherwise have done.

Meanwhile throughout Germany and Austria celebrations of the great victory were going on and a Vienna paper published what purported to be the terms that were to be granted the conquered Montenegrins, harsh in the extreme. It was even indicated that the Montenegrin soldiers must all serve with the Austrians on the Italian front. And next there was a strange silence, a period during which no mention at all was made of Montenegrins, as to whether they had accepted the terms or not.

Meanwhile among the Allies, who had not expected that Montenegro would give in so quickly, there was much criticism of the little state's surrender. It was suggested that it had been inspired for dynastic reasons, by a pro-Austrian section of the court. It was even asserted that King Nicholas had secretly come to terms with Austria before the fall of Mount Lovcen and that the resistance put up by the Montenegrins was unreal and of a purely theatrical character. It was recalled that the wife of the Montenegrin Crown Prince was a German princess. It was said that a compact was in existence, and had been in existence for several months, by which Montenegro agreed to hand Mount Lovcen over to the Austrians in return for Scutari.

These speculations were finally terminated by an official statement issued by Sir J. Roper Parkington, the Consul General for Montenegro in London, in which he said that the king and the Government of Montenegro had peremptorily refused the conditions of peace offered them by Austria and that Montenegro would continue the struggle to the bitter end. The announcement made by the Austrian Government that the Montenegrins had already laid down their arms seemed, therefore, to have been without foundation. This communiqué also stated that all the reports issued by the Austrians had been in large part untrue.

"King Nicholas," continued this official announcement, "remains with his two sons at the head of his troops, to organize a final defense, and to take part, in case of necessity, in the retreat of his brave army. His majesty expresses the hope that the Allies will eventually afford him effectual assistance for the retreat, as they have already done for the Serbian army."

In the fourth week in January, 1916, the Montenegrin premier, M. Mïuskovitch, issued a note admitting there had been negotiations with Austria, but asserted that they had been merely a pretext to gain time, to insure the safe retreat of the army toward Podgoritza and Scutari, as well as to give opportunity to the Serbian troops to leave Podgoritza and Scutari for Alessio and Durazzo in Albania.

On January 23, 1916, old King Nicholas appeared in Rome, where he was met by his son-in-law, the King of Italy, and from thence he went on to Lyons, in France, where his queen had preceded him and where, by the courtesy of the French Government, the capital of Montenegro was temporarily established.

At this time the Austrian Government had continued issuing reports to the effect that the Montenegrin soldiers were laying down their arms, but this seems to have been only partly true. Though many of them were captured, a much greater number joined the Serbians in Albania, where they made a juncture with the forces under Essad Pasha.

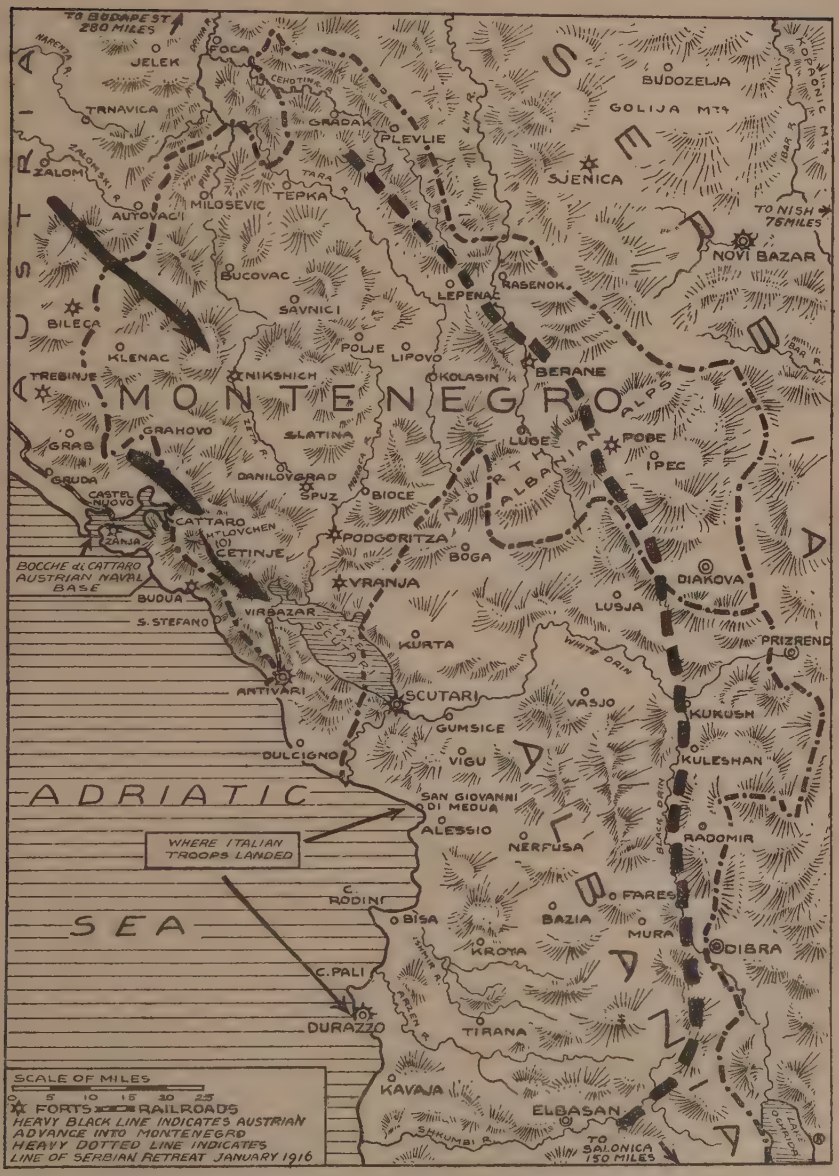
The Austrians, however, continued their advance, occupying Scutari on the 23d and San Giovanni di Medua on the 25th. Thus Montenegro itself was finally overrun.

But this little country, the poorest in Europe, offered the Austrians very little reward for their enterprise.

An Austrian journalist, accompanying the invading forces when they took possession of the king's palace in Cettinje, described the interior decorations as follows:

"In the reception room two great oil paintings occupied the positions of honor. One was that of the Emperor of Austria and the other was that of the Queen of Hungary. In the king's study, on one of the writing tables, there was a portrait of Francis Joseph and in other rooms we also came across his picture."

On the whole, Montenegro had not made the desperate resistance which its reputation for hard fighting had led people to believe it would put up. This partial failure was explained by M. Mïuskovitch, who declared that when Montenegro entered



THE AUSTRIAN CAMPAIGN IN MONTENEGRO

the war on the side of the Allies she had been promised everything necessary for the army and also for the civil population, because even in normal times they import wheat. Russia and France were to have sent supplies, but this promise could not be carried out. They had done the best they could with the materials on hand, but without ammunition they could not be expected to fight.

The Montenegrins, said the premier, had been given the task of protecting the rear of the Serbian army and they had defended the Sandjak frontier so successfully that on this side the Serbians had had time to retire. But when the Serbians were obliged to fall back on Montenegrin territory, their arrival precipitated events. The Montenegrins had still some supplies, but with 120,000 to 130,000 additional mouths to feed, these were soon exhausted. On many occasions the Montenegrin soldiers did not receive rations for a whole week and when they did, each ration only amounted to half a pound of corn flour a day.

After escaping, King Nicholas sent the following letter to General Vukovitch:

"I order you anew to resist the enemy in the most energetic way possible. In the event of a retreat, follow the direction of the Serbian army toward Durazzo. The Serbian commanders have been informed of this. You will receive food supplies at Medua and farther on.

"Prince Mirko and all the other ministers who have remained cannot in any case open negotiations with anyone whatever. The French Government has promised our retreating army all possible facilities, such as it gave to the Serbian army. Prince Mirko and the other ministers must in no case remain, but make every possible effort to escape."

Having completed their invasion of Montenegro, the Austrians now began to continue their advance over into Albania. On January 26, 1916, they reached San Giovanni di Medua, a seaport in northern Albania. At the same time Essad Pasha at Durazzo reported that he was being threatened by an Austrian and Bulgarian column marching northwest from Berat, while still another column was heading toward the Italian forces in Avlona.

Meanwhile all haste was being made in getting the Serbians safely out of Albania and transporting them to Corfu, the Greek island lying south of Avlona, in the Adriatic, which the Allies had occupied under the protest of the Greek Government. This undertaking was much facilitated by an improvement in the weather, which until then had been very severe, and by the construction of bridges across the rivers by a force of British engineers. Depots of provisions were also established along all the roads by which the refugees were straggling in toward the coast. The few guns, limbers, and munitions which these fragments of the Serbian army had brought with them were transported to Brindisi. At about the same time that the Austrians occupied San Giovanni di Medua, a Bulgarian detachment had occupied Dibra, in southern Albania, just above the Greek frontier and not far from Lake Ochrida and Monastir.

On February 10, 1916, the last of the Serbian soldiers had been taken out of Albania. In spite of the attempt made by Austrian ships and submarines, involving several minor naval engagements with the ships of the Allies, the embarkations had been going on at the rate of from eight to ten thousand men a day. In Corfu alone, 75,000 had been landed; others were taken to Bizerta, the French naval port in Tunis, and some had been sent to Italy. On this date Dr. Vesnitch, the Serbian minister in Paris, made the following statement:

"One hope still illumines the night of invaded Serbia; her avenging army. At present that army numbers more than 100,000 men. It can be confidently stated that it will be increased to 150,000."

On February 11, 1916, the Austrians had advanced within a few miles of Durazzo and on the following day occupied the Tirana heights, between Breza and Bazar Siak, Breza being about twelve miles northeast of Durazzo and Bazar Siak about halfway between these two towns. Two days later the Italian forces advanced against this Austrian column and delivered a strong attack, which was repulsed by the Austrians, according to Vienna dispatches. Meanwhile the Bulgarians were occupying

Fieri, about sixteen miles from Avlona, and claimed that they had taken possession of a third of southern Albania. A day or two later the Austrian and Bulgarian columns operating in central Albania made a junction and occupied Elbassan, thirty-eight miles southeast of Durazzo.

The enemy was, in fact, closing in on Durazzo. On February 25, 1916, the Austro-Bulgarian forces had driven the Italians to the isthmus west of the Durs lakes and the Austrian artillery began to open fire on Durazzo itself. At daybreak the next morning the Austrians closed in and the Italians and Albanians under Essad Pasha were finally, after a spirited resistance, driven back from their positions at Bazar Siak. Soon afterward the Italians on the southern bank of the lower Arzen were forced to abandon their positions. The Austrians crossed the river and proceeded southward.

At noon a decisive action east of Bazar Siak drove the Italians from their positions. The same fate was suffered by the defenders of Sasso Blanco, six miles east of Durazzo. By evening the entire outer circle of defenses had been taken. The Austrians, advancing to the inner line positions, observed that the Italians were embarking on their ships.

They were now able to reach the docks with their artillery, and attempted to hinder the retirement of the Italians with a heavy shell fire and succeeded in inflicting some damage to some of the ships. But by the following morning the Italians had made good their escape, and with them went Essad Pasha and his Albanian troops.

On February 28, 1916, the Austrian Government issued a full report on the campaign in Albania which had culminated in that section in the capture of Durazzo:

"The Austrian troops have captured Durazzo. During the forenoon one column, under the fire of the Italians, advanced across the northern isthmus to Portos, four miles north of Durazzo. Our troops advancing across the southern isthmus were hindered at the beginning by the fire of the Italian artillery, but toward night numerous detachments, by wading, swimming, and floating, reached the bridge east of Durazzo, driving back the

Italian rear guard. At dawn an Austrian battalion entered the burning town."

The spoils were, according to the report, twenty-three cannon, including six big coast defense guns, 10,000 rifles, and a large amount of artillery ammunition and provisions.

The Italian version was:

"After our ships had silenced the enemy batteries and swept the coast and near-by roads of their fire, all the Italian troops which were sent temporarily to Durazzo to cover the evacuation of the Serbians, Montenegrins, and Albanians, reembarked without incident and were transported to Avlona, notwithstanding the bad weather which still prevails in the lower Adriatic. War material which was still serviceable was also taken aboard the ships and the damaged supplies were either rendered useless or destroyed."

Thus, by the first of March the Austro-Bulgarian forces had almost completed their conquest of Albania, the only important point still in the hands of the Italians being Avlona. At this point, however, the Italians had made longer and bigger preparations for defense, besides which they were here in far greater numbers, estimated at from 50,000 to 120,000.

CHAPTER XXXVI

CONDITIONS IN SERBIA, GREECE, AND RUMANIA

DURING this time the Bulgarians and Germans were establishing a semicivil government in Serbia. Many conflicting reports were circulated, some of them to the effect that there was much friction between the German and Bulgarian officers. Whether Germany and Bulgaria really intended to make an attack on Saloniki has until now been a question, but in those districts near the Greek frontier considerable forces of Germans remained, garrisoning the large towns, notably Mo-

nastir. The forces along the frontier itself were Bulgarians at first, but toward the end of February, 1916, detachments of Germans began taking their places along the front. The Allies in Saloniki reported that up to this time there were heavy desertions from the Bulgarian forces, the deserters coming in to Saloniki, complaining that they were starved and did not wish to fight the French and British. When the Germans appeared on the front, these desertions suddenly ceased.

In the middle of January Emperor William of Germany paid Serbia a visit and inspected the captured towns and cities of most prominence. On the 18th he arrived in Nish, where he was met by King Ferdinand and Prince Boris of Bulgaria. The two sovereigns then attended Mass in the cathedral together, after which they reviewed the troops.

At a dinner which followed the emperor announced to King Ferdinand his nomination to the rank of a Prussian field marshal and presented him with the baton. King Ferdinand in turn bestowed the order for bravery on the emperor and General von Mackensen. In a speech which he made, King Ferdinand addressed the emperor with "Ave Imperator, Cæsar et Rex." ("Hail Emperor, Cæsar and King.")

During the first two months of the year the Allies had continued to reenforce their forces in Saloniki, and toward the end of February there were reports to the effect that General Sarrail would assume an offensive up into Macedonia and Bulgaria. On January 20, 1916, the ships of the Allies again bombarded Dedeagatch vigorously, then proceeded to Port Lagos and swept that seaport with a heavy shell fire. A few days later a feat, which in some respects established a new record in the annals of French aviation, was performed by an attacking squadron of forty French aeroplanes.

The French squadron left Saloniki at seven in the morning and divided into two parts, one of which proceeded to Monastir, about sixty miles distant, and the other going to Ghevgli. Some of the aeroplanes were armed with guns.

Altogether over two hundred projectiles were discharged at the enemy's camp, on the building occupied by the Bulgarian

headquarters in Monastir, and on other military establishments. The airmen were vigorously bombarded in return, but sustained no casualties. One notable feature of the raid was that the squadron had to contend with a forty-mile gale from abeam during the whole trip and they had also to fly over mountains 6,000 feet in height. By noon both sections of the squadron had returned to Saloniki.

On the part of Greece there was no change; she still continued her attitude of sullen acquiescence to the presence of the Allies' troops in Saloniki. In the last week of January General Sarrail sent a detachment to occupy Cape and Fort Kara Burun, about twelve miles from Saloniki and commanding the harbor. This action, it was stated, was due to the fact that a British transport had been torpedoed by a German submarine under the very guns of the fort. As usual, Greece protested, and, again as usual, no notice was taken of her protest.

At about this same time King Constantine sent for the American correspondent of the Associated Press in Athens and asked him to make public certain statements he wished to make, whereupon he gave the journalist an interview so remarkable that when it was published it attracted world-wide attention.

"It is the merest cant," he said, "for Great Britain and France to talk about the violation of the neutrality of Belgium after what they themselves have done and are doing. . . . The only forum of public opinion open to me is the United States. The situation is far too vital for me to care a snap about royal dignity in the matter of interviews when the very life of Greece as an independent country is at stake. I shall appeal to America again and again, if necessary, for that fair hearing which has been denied me by the press of the Allies.

"Just look at the list of Greek territories already occupied by the allied troops—Lemnos, Imbros, Mytilene, Castelloriza, Corfu, Saloniki, including the Chalcidice Peninsula, and a large part of Macedonia. In proportion to all Greece it is as if that part of the United States which was won from Mexico after the Mexican War were occupied by foreign troops, and not so much as by your leave. . . . Where is the necessity for the occupation

of Corfu? If Greece is an ally of Serbia, so also is Italy, and transportation of the Serbs to Italy would be simpler than to Corfu. Is it because the Italians are refusing to accept the Serbs, fearing the spread of cholera, and the Allies are thinking that the Greeks want to be endangered by cholera any more than the Italians? . . . The history of the Balkan politics of the Allies is the record of one crass mistake after another, and now, through pique over the failure of their every Balkan calculation, they try to unload on Greece the results of their own stupidity. We warned them that the Gallipoli expedition would be fruitless and that the Austro-Germans would surely crush Serbia. . . . At the beginning of the war eighty per cent of the Greeks were favorable to the Allies; to-day not forty, no, not twenty per cent would turn their hands to aid the Allies."

As for Venizelos, his voice was no longer heard. So disliked was he by the Government that when certain soldiers joined in a celebration of his name-day, fifty of them were sentenced to a month's confinement as a punishment for so expressing their sympathy. In the middle of February, 1916, this enmity was especially acute. Venizelos himself told a journalist that he was holding himself so aloof from politics that he did not even read the reports of the proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies.

But on March 1, 1916, there was a report from Athens that King Constantine had suddenly summoned Venizelos. Several interviews followed, and it was then announced that the king and Venizelos were reconciled. Whether that meant any change in Greece's policy was not mentioned. The general impression prevailed at this time, however, that the great success of the Russians in Asiatic Turkey was having its effect on the King of Greece and his Government.

Of Rumania little was heard during the entire winter, no startling changes having taken place in her attitude. In January the British Government contracted with Rumania for the purchase of 800,000 tons of wheat, to the value of about fifty million dollars, to be delivered by the middle of April.

On February 14, 1916, the Rumanian Government announced that its mobilization had been completed by the calling up of a

fresh class and that the General Staff was completing the defenses of the Carpathians and the fortifications along the banks of the Danube in the new Dobrudja territory, which had been taken from Bulgaria during the Balkan Wars. Take Jonescu, the well-known Rumanian statesman, in an interview with a French journalist on the same date said:

"As regards Rumanian policy; we made a great mistake in not intervening when Bulgaria entered the war. I hope that we shall not make the same mistake again and that we shall not quail before Germany's threats, if she makes them. . . . The country is unanimous on this point."

PART V—THE DARDANELLES AND RUSSO-TURKISH CAMPAIGNS

CHAPTER XXXVII

CONDITIONS IN GALLIPOLI—ATTACK AT SUVLA BAY

WE left the allied troops at the end of July, 1915, firmly established at two points on the Gallipoli Peninsula. But though they had won these secure bases by terrible losses and much heroism, yet they had progressed but slightly toward their ultimate objects—the capture of the three key points to the peninsula defenses and the opening of the Dardanelles to the fleets of England, France, and Russia.

Indeed, it had become apparent, not only to those in command on the spot, but to the authorities in London and in Paris, that the allied forces had reached a condition of stalemate on the two fronts. In other words, the Turks by their stubborn, intelligent, and brave defense had eliminated the possibility of the element of surprise, without which it was almost hopeless to expect success under the modern conditions of trench warfare.

Much as the world appreciated the virtues of the Turk as a fighting man, it must be confessed that he furnished the allied troops with an unpleasant surprise. He displayed, first of all, a quite remarkable degree of bravery, hurling himself against the intrenched troops of France aand England with an abandon and a disregard of personal safety that excited the admiration of his enemies. The whole Gallipoli campaign is replete with examples of Turkish valor.

Furthermore, the Turks were well led, not only by their German officers, but by the Turkish commanders as well. Frequently they surprised and confounded the allied command in this respect, successfully foiling vital movements by daring and original maneuvers. This was all the more remarkable because it demanded cool thinking at critical moments, not the excited religious fanaticism for which the Turk had been noted. The Turk is an adept in the construction of trenches and their use.

Thus it became apparent to all that if any real success was to be obtained in the Dardanelles campaign the element of surprise must be reintroduced. Sir Ian Hamilton refused to throw away his troops in hopeless frontal attacks against practically impregnable defenses. He called upon Lord Kitchener for reenforcements, at the same time issuing an encouraging bulletin to his troops, telling them that help was coming.

These new troops, which began to arrive at Mudros about the first week of August, 1915, were not to be used for strengthening the two fronts, but were to be employed in an entirely fresh attempt to surprise the Turks at a new point, push inland before the defenders had time to bring up troops, and seize commanding positions in the first great rush. In fact it was a repetition of the attempts made at Achi Baba and Krithia at the original landings, applying the lessons learned at such tremendous cost on those occasions.

Besides the military considerations which made such an attempt desirable, the political situation in the Balkans made an allied success in the Dardanelles highly imperative. The success of the great German drive against the Russians in Poland and Galicia had had a disturbing effect upon at least one of the Balkan neutrals. Bulgaria, it soon became apparent, was preparing to enter the struggle on the side of the Central Powers and Entente diplomats reported to their Governments that nothing short of a smashing victory at the Strait would change the purpose of King Ferdinand. Furthermore, the Entente Powers were disturbed over the attitude of Greece and Rumania. It had been confidently expected that the latter country would enter the struggle on the side of the Entente Powers at the same time

that Italy actively entered the struggle. Indeed, the Bank of England had made an advance to Rumania of $25,000,000, although it was expressly understood that the loan was purely a business transaction and had no political import. It was believed that Rumanian sympathy, as a whole, was with the Entente Powers, but it was known that financial, commercial, and dynastic ties with Germany and Austria were important and might at any moment, in favorable circumstances, turn the scales in favor of the Central Powers.

It had become apparent, too, that even Greece had been impressed by the success of the Germans. It was known that King Constantine, with his strong German sympathies, and especially his oft-expressed admiration for the power of the German military machine, was determined at all costs to keep his little kingdom out of the great struggle. Inasmuch as these two countries, Greece and Rumania, had been confidently regarded as belligerents on the side of the Entente Powers, even their neutrality was regarded as a blow to the Allies.

This, then, was the situation that made a dashing stroke in Gallipoli necessary. Sir Ian Hamilton prepared for it with great skill. A point called Suvla Bay, north of the base established by the Australian and New Zealand troops at Anzac Cove, was selected for the point of landing, aiming to cooperate with the force already ashore and assisted by a strong diversion aimed against the Bulair lines.

For this supreme attack, upon which so much was dependent, fresh troops were brought from England—men who had seen nothing of the fighting on any front. Indeed, it is a question for future experts and historians to argue pro and con whether or not the outcome of the attack was not due almost entirely to this use of green troops. How they were depended upon in a crucial operation, how they wavered, and the consequences to the allied operations will be told in the narrative.

Suvla Bay lies between five and six miles from Anzac Cove. It is a wide, shallow indentation forming an almost perfect half circle. Although the landing facilities were not as good as at some other points on the coast of the peninsula, it had the ad-

vantage of providing plenty of more or less open country for maneuvering, once the troops were well ashore. This was an element lacking in the case of all the other landings, and one that Sir Ian Hamilton found of vital importance. The nature of the Gallipoli country as a whole made flank attacks almost impossible, but he hoped in the case of the fresh landing to be able to avoid a direct frontal assault.

The new troops, once ashore at Suvla Bay, were to push rapidly across country, skirt Salt Lake, and carry the crest of the Anafarta Hills, a range running to something like 600 feet in height and dominating two important roads and the adjacent country, excepting the all-important peak of Sari Bair.

At the same time the Australian and New Zealand troops were to make a sudden and supreme attack upon Sari Bair itself. It speaks volumes for the confidence which Sir Ian Hamilton had in the fighting qualities of these colonial troops that he set them such a tremendous task. Since the landing at Anzac Cove, the Turks, under the supervision of their German mentors, had fortified every yard of the thousand feet of heights known as Sari Bair. An unprecedented number of machine guns had been brought up and placed in concealed positions from which it was possible to sweep every line of advance, thus powerfully increasing the volume of the infantry and artillery fire. It did not seem possible that an attack, however resolutely and bravely made, could succeed in the face of such a fierce defense.

The third element in this new attack was to be a demonstration against Karachali, on the European mainland of Turkey, menacing the Bulair lines as well as the railway running to Sofia, Bulgaria. For this purpose a number of troopships and warships carrying what was known as the Greek Legion and made up of Cretan volunteers, were to be used. It was hoped that this diversion would attract most of the available reserves in and about the Gallipoli Peninsula and make impossible the reenforcement of the troops stationed near Anafarta Hills and Sari Bair.

The fourth and last element was to consist of a determined attack upon the Turkish defenses about Krithia, pinning to that

spot all the troops possible. Curiously enough the plans of the Turkish command, dominated by Enver Pasha, favored the allied troops in that the Turks had planned an attack upon the enemy on the Krithia lines about this time and had concentrated most of their available reserves near the tip of the peninsula.

This intention on the part of the Turks was undoubtedly due to the information they had received of the arrival of fresh British troops. But quickly as they pushed forward their preparations, the Allies were too lively for them. On August 6, 1915, the French and British troops advanced against the Turks and there followed some of the most determined and desperate fighting of the whole Dardanelles campaign. In the fighting the East Lancashire Division, a territorial force, did heroic work and bore the brunt of the fighting. There were many individual feats of daring and bravery, yet one stands out conspicuously. A youthful Manchester schoolmaster, Lieutenant W. T. Forshaw, held his trench against attacks for forty-five hours. For forty-one of those hours he was continuously throwing bombs and only desisted when his arm became temporarily paralyzed. When, finally, the Turks swarmed into his trench, revolver in hand he led his wearied troops and drove them out. He richly deserved the coveted Victoria Cross which was conferred upon him.

At dawn on the following day, the Australians began the attack at Sari Bair. The force at Anzac Cove had been reenforced with Indian troops and two divisions of the new troops from England. As planned, the operations at Sari Bair were to consist of an attack, first on the right, to serve as a feint, and then a main attack on the left which was to link up and support the attack from Suvla Bay, moving around in back of Salt Lake.

The attack on the right, upon what was called Lone Pine Plateau, was a dispiriting failure on the opening day. The dismounted troops of the Third Australian Light Horse, a magnificent body of men, were sent forward to storm the elaborate trenches of the enemy. The attack was made in three lines. The first was mowed down to a man; of the second only a few sur-

vivors reached the Turkish trenches to be either captured or killed; the third was stopped by a change of orders just as it was about to follow the other two into the valley of sure death.

On the following day, the 8th, the main Australian infantry forces were sent forward against the same trenches and, after some bloody fighting, succeeded in capturing and holding them against repeated counterattacks.

While this holding operation was in progress the main attack was being made on the left. New Zealand and Australian troops, supported by a picked force of Indian hillmen, used to night warfare and campaigning in difficult mountain country, starting in the evening of August 6, 1915, made a rapid march along the coast as far as Fisherman's Hut. There large quantities of stores had been gradually accumulated in preparation for this very movement.

At Fisherman's Hut the force, numbering 6,000 men, under the command of Major General Sir A. J. Godley, turned sharply inland and just before dawn, almost without the knowledge of the Turkish defenders, had arrived within half a mile of one of the dominating hills on the right flank of the vitally important Sari Bair.

At this point Godley's force was split into three columns. One composed of Australian troops, was based on Asma Dere, almost within touch of Suvla Bay. The Indian troops were within striking distance of Chunuk Bair, close to the towering peak of Koja Chemen, rising sharply to almost 1,000 feet, while the New Zealanders were within striking distance of Rhododendron Ridge.

With the dawn of August 7, 1915, the Turks awoke to the seriousness of the new menace. So difficult was the country in which the British troops were operating that the Ottoman commander had dismissed all idea of a serious attack from that point and had merely posted patrols in the hills guarding the flank of Sari Bair. Now, however, reserves were hurried to the scene, and so rapidly and in such large numbers did they arrive that the troops from Anzac were soon compelled to dig

themselves in in an attempt to hold what they had won by their surprise march.

Early on the morning of August 8, 1915, the Australians moved out from Asma Dere. They had as an objective a near-by hill from which it was proposed to storm the height known as Koja Chemen. Unfortunately for their plan, the Turks by this time had brought up such forces that the Australians were outnumbered. They had not proceeded far before they discovered that they were being rapidly encircled. A retreat was immediately decided upon and so closely were they followed by the Turks that the British troops had difficulty even in holding their original position at Asma Dere.

Meanwhile the New Zealanders were having more success. Carrying full kit, food, and water, these splendid colonials clambered up the steep sides of Rhododendron Ridge, swept the Turks from the crest and charged up the southwestern slope of the main peak of Sari Bair. There they dug in and fought desperately to hold their advantage against successive waves of Turkish infantry that came charging down upon them.

At the same time the Indian troops gained some fresh ground in the neighborhood of Hill Q.

During the night of August 8, 1915, and the early morning of the following day, the officers of the British forces who had survived the fighting reorganized the scattered remnants and prepared for a fresh advance. About midnight reenforcements arrived at all three bases and were hurried forward to relieve as much as possible the exhausted men in the firing line.

Just as dawn was breaking on August 9, 1915, word was passed along the lines that a supreme effort was to be made to carry the heights that barred the allied troops from a great victory. British and French warships posted close inshore and in wireless touch with the troops opened an intense bombardment of the Chunuk Bair, Hill Q, and Koja Chemen. Then the whistles blew, the infantry leaped out of its shallow trenches and, with a yell that echoed and reechoed through the Gallipoli hills, charged up the precipitous slopes.

Of the three columns, the greatest success was gained by the Indians. Led by the hardy Gurkhas, they actually reached the crest of Hill Q and looked down on the much-to-be-desired Strait, bathed in the hot August sunshine.

The Turkish command full well realized the importance of this position, and immediately guns from every angle were turned on the Indian troops and the New Zealanders who were supporting them on the left. A hurricane of shells was poured on the troops before they had time to dig themselves in. A few seconds later a counterattack was launched in such force against the New Zealanders that they and the Indians were swept down the slopes of Sari Bair.

By nightfall of August 8, 1915, the few Turkish patrols in the district had been driven off and considerable forces of the British troops had made their way inland. Splitting into two columns, one moved north and seized Karakol Bagh; the other and larger force marched across the low country until it had arrived in position facing the Anafarta Ridge, its objective.

Lying between the line of advance from Suvla Bay to the Anafarta Ridge and Asma Dere, the base of the Australian troops operating against Sari Bair, were a number of hills, two of which played supremely important parts in the fighting of the next few days. They have been called Chocolate Hill and Burnt Hill.

It was in an action against Chocolate Hill that the battle opened. Moving in a night attack on August 8, 1915, Irish troops stormed Chocolate Hill and came within measurable distance of connecting up with the Australian division. Then preparations were made for an attack upon the Anafarta Ridge.

On August 11, 1915, the right wing of the forces landed at Suvla Bay succeeded in working along the coast and linking up with the Australians at Asma Dere. They brought with them to the hard-hitting Colonials the first word of the progress of the Anafarta operation, and it was a bitter disappointment to the latter to learn that their heroic efforts against Sari Bair had been largely made in vain because of the failure of the Suvla Bay force to accomplish its task.

Both sides then busied themselves preparing for the new warfare in this region. The British consolidated their positions, and on August 15, 1915, sent forward the same Irish division that had captured Chocolate Hill in an attempt to rush Dublin Hill. After a hand-to-hand fight with the Turkish troops, who swarmed out of their trenches to meet the charging Irishmen, the hill was won.

The Turks, meanwhile, were strongly fortifying not only the Anafarta Ridge proper but some of the hills commanding its left flank. Here Hill 70 and Hill 112 were the major positions, and on August 21, 1915, the British troops moved out in an effort to capture them.

A portion of the British troops succeeded in reaching the top of Hill 70. There, however, they were greeted by a terrible fire from a battery concealed on Hill 112 and forced to fall back, first to the lower slopes of the hill and then, when the fire slackened, to their original intrenched positions.

Even less success was enjoyed by the troops making the assault upon Hill 112. The Turkish artillery poured a curtain of fire among the shrubs at the foot of the hill which effectively prevented the proposed advance. Farther to the south at the same time the Australians were attacking Hill 60 of the Sari Bair group and succeeded in driving the Turkish defenders from its crest.